Voluntary Associations and the Middle Class in Edinburgh, 1780-1820

Andrew J. Dalgleish

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I declare that the work in this thesis has been composed by myself, and that the work involved in its preparation is entirely my own.

Andrew Dalgleish

Dedication

To the Memory of my Mother

Abstract

From the late 18th century there was an increase in the formation of voluntary associations in Britain and a growth in the membership of such organisations. This thesis analyses the historical significance of voluntary societies created and supported by the Edinburgh middle class between 1780 and 1820.

Chapter Two outlines the social structure of Edinburgh in this period. Using categorised occupational titles from the Post Office Directories, the diversity of the middle class, and the preponderance of small units of production and retailing is emphasised.

Chapter Three contextualises the changing typical cultural form of elite voluntary associations from relatively small, exclusivist, ephemeral and introverted organisations to more open 'subscriber democracies' which publicly projected their aims and aspired to gain social authority.

The next three chapters examine the impetus, aims, institutional practices and memberships of key voluntary societies in the fields of policing and poor relief, religion and education. It is argued that the cultural production of such organisations was crucial for the mediation of power within and between classes during this period of rapid social change. Although elite-led, voluntary associations provided consensual platforms of common interest for the Edinburgh middle class, appealing to their shared concerns about commercial prosperity, discrimination in the distribution of resources, and the supervision of the poor.

Chapter Seven uses techniques of nominal record linkage to provide quantitative evidence of the social characteristics of membership of various types of Societies. The over-representation of the legal/commercial elite, and the under-representation of lower middle class groups compared to their proportion in the middle class as a whole is emphasised. Interconnections between certain types of membership lend substance to the argument for a growing cohesiveness of middle class organisation.

The thesis contributes to our understanding of the dynamics of middle class formation in the early 19th century. The creation of a self-aware and socially confident middle class by the 1820s was partly due to their participation in voluntary associations which claimed to be representative of Edinburgh inhabitants in ways which local state and parish-based authorities could not be.

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The physical production of the thesis might never have been completed but for the typing of Pamela Jenkins who has always been 'consistent'.

I would like to record a particular thank-you to Pamela and John Simons, whose financial support from time to time has been invaluable.

Finally, my greatest debt is to my wife. I have often seen authors of dissertations write of themselves and their dearest partner as if they were two old comrades who had gone through a war together: I now understand why. Pauline has made enormous sacrifices and they will never be underestimated or unappreciated.

Contents

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION : CONCEPTS AND QUESTIONS

During the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, there was a marked increase in the formation of new voluntary associations and an increase in the numbers of people participating in such organisations. The spatial level of organisation for this kind of collective action varied from neighbourhood-based Societies of mutual aid (such as friendly Societies) to associations with national and international networks of support. Commonly, in this period, voluntary organisations were associated with the town. Societies, particularly those formed and supported by urban elites, identified themselves with the town by including its name in their name. They consciously appealed to urban inhabitants to become members, they met in prominent town buildings and often defined their sphere of action by the town boundaries or surrounding districts. Even Societies which sought to influence ideas and institutions on a national scale, had their main constituency and infrastructure in the town. The study of urban voluntary associations in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries is, therefore, likely to throw light on the relationships between the emerging middle class and the towns in which they created and expressed their power and identities. This thesis analyses the significance of the development of middle class-led voluntary associations in one urban location - Edinburgh.

The following table demonstrates the pattern of frequency of new voluntary associations founded in Edinburgh between 1780 and 1870. The information has been compiled mainly from a literature survey of primary printed sources such as annual reports. The survey should not be regarded as exhaustive. It necessarily excludes Societies which had neither the incentive nor the resources to publicise their activities. However, the intention here is merely to indicate the

general trend of new foundations.

Incidence of New Voluntary Associations in Edinburgh, 1780-1870

1780 - 1789	9
1790 - 1799	16
1800 - 1809	7
1810 - 1819	30
1820 - 1829	25
1830 - 1839	19
1840 - 1849	17
1850 - 1859	9
1860 - 1869	7

The study of the nature and development of voluntary associations in the later period has been undertaken elsewhere [1]. This thesis will concentrate on the period 1780-1820, giving particular emphasis to the 1810s when frequency of foundations peaked and many older Societies enjoyed renewed prosperity.

Diversity and specialisation of purpose were prominent features of the voluntary associations of our period. They included social clubs, libraries, medical charities, friendly societies, debating clubs, poor relief societies, political associations, societies for suppressing begging and prostitution, societies for relieving debtors, associations for establishing secular and religious schools and for the distribution of bibles and tracts, societies for promoting art and singing, clubs for playing curling, associations for encouraging saving, societies for establishing foreign missions and those providing information and competition for enthusiastic gardeners.

There was diversity also in terms of size, persistence, internal structure, membership criteria, social composition, networks and the relationships societies had with other formal agencies such as the church, the town council or the Faculty of Advocates.

Many studies have limited themselves to particular types of

voluntary activity, restricting their field of analysis to the content of social action and overtly stated primary purposes of policy. [2] Here we shall be analysing a range of different voluntary associations over a relatively short space of time. By using the term 'voluntary association' to describe these diverse social organisations a unity and coherence of social practices and cultural form is being implied. Let us be clear what the coherency of this social phenomenon consists of in order to justify the use of the voluntary association as a discrete category of analysis. There is the danger that the categorisation and definition of a particular institution such as a voluntary association may become a circular process. Thus, clear operational assumptions about the nature of the voluntary association need to be made explicit in order to provide a framework of analysis and to guide significant questions of interpretation that might arise from the study of their social form.

Generalised models of the voluntary association as a distinct social form which are cross-culturally and ahistorically applicable are fraught with difficulty. [3] The relative nature of volition, the changing relationship between the state and voluntary sector, and the variant meanings of associations for different social groups in different historical contexts have led many to concur with the pioneering work of Robert H. Lowie who could find no satisfactory way to generalise about the place of associations in social organisation. [4]

The most basic common characteristics of the voluntary association might be stated thus: it is an organisation in which people act collectively in order to pursue goals or interests. Goals or interests may be implicit or explicit. Certain interests may be

furthered as a result of the effect of participation. Not all members may be formally involved in goal accomplishment and there may be a differentiation of goals between members. Membership of voluntary associations is not compulsory, nor is it determined by birth or kinship.

Beyond these general assumptions, however, our conception of voluntary associations has to be flexible enough to embrace the essentially relativistic nature of their form of organisation, their relationship with wider society, and the historically and culturally variable meanings of membership. We must, therefore, retreat from universalistic statements and ground our analysis in an empirical, historically-based typology of voluntary association form and membership. What were the salient characteristics of voluntary associations in late eighteenth and early nineteenth century Edinburgh?

Membership criteria, conditions of membership, aims, constituency of action, and the roles, responsibilities and powers of the leadership of Societies were, typically, formally defined. The definitions were usually in a written and publicised form. The conditions under which Societies met and acted were sanctioned by the members themselves. The bureaucratic form of this was typically the Annual General Meeting which, as an institutional body, had the authority to choose and confer power on the leadership and to amend the rules, regulations and goals of the Society. Societies had a recognisable corporate identity which was typically urban-based. They had a relatively persistent existence in comparison to the ephemeral club-type organisations of the early and mid-eighteenth century. They acted without the authority or support of the national

state and there was no formal legal or political sanctions for their aims. Certain Societies did, however, have a close relationship with the local state or, at least, relied on the town council for recognition of their corporate status. Finally, we may observe that participation in most Societies of this period was largely middle class. Participation by the working classes was likely to be confined to district-based or trade-based friendly Societies or to the subscriptions of auxiliaries of middle-class based organisations.

As we shall examine in Chapter Three, certain typical characteristics of voluntary associations became more prevalent and persistent from the end of the eighteenth century. Firstly, Societies became more institutionalised in the sense that their practices displayed a high degree of regularity and continuity. Meetings of the general membership and of committees were convened at stipulated times on a regular basis. There was a consistent pattern to the procedures followed at meetings. The activities of Societies and the authority of their leadership acquired legitimacy in wider society on the basis of rules and regulations which had the consent of the membership and were perceived as impartial and rational. [5] Secondly, voluntary associations increasingly claimed that their aims were for the benefit of the 'community'. the 'public' and society as a whole, rather than for the personal benefit of their members. In providing education, poor relief, and medical care for the working classes they were mobilising collective resources and regulating the consumption of those resources in the public sphere. They assumed responsibilities for functions that had previously been under the control of formally constituted public bodies such as kirk sessions

or the town council. Thirdly, as Societies claimed that their interests were the public interest, they became increasingly sensitive to the sanction of 'public opinion'. Typically, a public meeting of Edinburgh inhabitants became the legitimate basis on which Societies were founded and from which they assumed authority. Societies held themselves accountable to the public through regularly published annual reports and financial statements. Indeed by the nineteenth century Societies with similar aims were competing for a perceived finite fund of public subscriptions.

These practices, values and relationships operated with such regularity and consistency that we are justified in considering the formation and development of voluntary associations in this period as a coherent social phenomenon. The similarities of organisational form and the interconnections between their broad values and objectives created a cultural infrastructure of considerable importance. To this extent voluntary associations are a worthwhile object of analysis in their own right. However aspects of the cultural form of voluntary associations can be treated heuristically to throw light on wider social processes.

Anthropological and sociological studies of voluntary associations have affirmed Banton's remark that the study of such institutions is part of the study of social change. [6] This is understood in two main senses. Firstly, voluntary associations were active agencies of change in that they defined and diffused new or modified values, social relationships and institutional structures. Secondly, voluntary associations were indicators of social change, and an interpretation of their context, impetus, organisation, social composition, aims, strategies and use of language may illuminate, for

example, the nature of urban society and the social formation and relationships of classes insofar as such forces have influenced the development of voluntary association form. [7]

We shall expand on these theoretical propositions later, but let us now return to historical specifics. The years 1780-1820 were a time of fast and dramatic social change well suited to this study. [8] As we explain in Chapters Two and Three, the significant aspects of change were population expansion, urbanisation, the commercialisation of economic and social relationships, and the dissolution of paternalistic attitudes and authority structures. These developments created potential crises for the ordering of social relationships. In the urban environment connections between people were becoming more fragmented. Face-to-face care and supervision of the lower orders by parochial institutions or paternalistic employers was becoming more impractical as well as less ideologically compelling. Relations were also more antagonistic. Periodic food shortages, high grain prices, cyclical and seasonal unemployment affected more people in urban environments where the means of producing wealth and the consumption of it were highly visible. As is detailed in Chapters Three and Four this produced actual social conflict.

Demographic and economic changes also provided new opportunities for the creation of wealth, status and power. In Chapter Two, we point to the prevalence of a large and diverse Edinburgh middle class. The economic and social interests of this broad social group, which included merchants, bankers and professional men as well as shopkeepers, craftsmen and landladies, were tied to the markets, economic units, residences and cultural institutions of the town.

The ordering of social relationships, materially and ideologically, was crucial to the defence, reproduction and legitimation of those interests.

What, then, is the importance of voluntary associations for studying these wider social processes? We need to distinguish between three interrelated but distinct fields of analysis. Firstly, an examination of the roles which voluntary associations played as institutions, and the ways they related to other institutions, indicates the nature of some of the problems which urbanising, commercialising Edinburgh Society was experiencing and how these were handled politically and culturally. Secondly, a specific consequence of change was the making of new kinds of social relationships. We shall examine the ways in which relationships of power and status were produced and expressed within voluntary associations and between their participants and other social groups. Thirdly, we shall assume that the production and expression of these relationships - the articulation of interests and the development of cultural practices to reinforce them - had an effect on the way in which voluntary association participants made sense of their social experiences and, perceived themselves in relation to Society. In other words, we shall interpret the meaning for social actors of their affiliation to a voluntary association, focussing in particular on its significance for the formulation and expression of social identity.

The institutional form of the voluntary association assumes particular importance during periods of rapid social and economic change. [9] In Edinburgh, as in other cities during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, many societies were established as responses to specific crises of public order, poverty

and the perceived dangers of a dense, rootless urban populace lacking moral guidance. Although parochial institutions and the town council did themselves respond to such crises, the nature of voluntary association formation illustrates some of the difficulties of social transition for traditional authorities. Voluntary associations had the flexibility to quickly mobilise and then regulate access to collective resources in ways which the Church and local state did not. City-wide associations could broaden the basis of support on social issues such as education or poor relief, and were not constrained by the spatial administrative limits of parish boundaries, nor restricted in their constituencies of support by sectarian loyalties. Moreover, the reports and financial statements of voluntary associations gave a degree of accountability which people could not expect when paying assessed poor rates or making a contribution to a church collection authorised by the magistrates. The public action of voluntary associations without reference to the formal institutions of the state has been seen as characteristic of the strategic organisation of power by the middle class in the urban environment. [10] However, we must be careful not to over-emphasise the autonomous and self-regulatory nature of voluntary associations. The local state gave official sanction to their activities, sometimes provided material support and was often influential in policy-making. We shall explore these links in later chapters.

The incidence of voluntary associations is also indicative of attempts to adopt modern practices and values in response to changing social and economic conditions. [11] Voluntary associations characteristically reaffirm traditional values and attitudes while also promoting a progressive outlook, experimenting with new

practices and emphasising ideological perspectives and forms of behaviour appropriate to the changing social structure. In this sense they act as a kind of cultural bridge.

Publicists of voluntary associations in our period clearly saw themselves as a modern vanguard. The Edinburgh Auxiliary Missionary Society's address to the public in 1813 declared, "In no former age has there ever been such prompt and liberal attention to the condition of the poor, the diseased, the outcasts, the ignorant and the helpless". [12] The Society suggested that such charitable activity was paralleled by unprecedented success in the sciences, previously unexperienced enrichment in the arts and a diffusion of the principles of religious, civil and political liberty.

In certain important ways voluntary associations were modern. They focussed attention on the sheer scale of problems such as poverty, unemployment, sickness and illiteracy. They created broadly-based participatory institutions for dealing with such problems. They pioneered new practices of social surveys and basing policies on social statistical information. Such practices related to the expression and diffusion of ideas about 'discrimination' in making charity available to the poor and about how the distribution of resources was related to wider forces of wages, prices and the moral condition of the poor.

However, alongside these 'modern' practices and values, Societies also restated older paternalistic notions of 'men of influence and property' being the guardians and supervisors of the poor who in turn owed obedience and respect to their superiors in a mutually understood implicit contract. Also the impersonal relationships within the modern bureaucratic organisation of the

voluntary association coexisted with deference to personally esteemed, traditionally high-status figures such as the Duke of Buccleuch who was given honorific positions in several Societies. We shall elaborate on this mix of modernity and traditionalism at various points throughout the thesis.

At the level of their individual members, voluntary associations also played important roles as adaptive mechanisms. Urban society was becoming more complex and diverse. In economic activity, within the middle class there were great differences in their experiences of the nature of the processes of production and the relationships these involved. In Edinburgh, as we shall see in Chapter Two, there was great variety in the scale and type of industrial production and retailing as well as a substantial professional strata, a relatively small but influential merchant and banking sector, and considerable numbers accruing rentier income who were not directly involved in the production process. Economic differentiation gave rise to disparities in status groupings which manifested themselves in different patterns of consumption and styles of life. [13] Residential lifestyles became one of the most obvious features of social diversity. As is often mentioned, the wealthier Edinburgh inhabitants removed themselves to the so-called New Town. [14] There is impressionistic evidence from the Post Office Directories of an increasing separation of home and work. In religious life, there was, as will be discussed in Chapter Five, a pluralisation of religious belief and church adherence.

In this context voluntary associations were important foci for social integration. As personal ties became less significant in the urban environment and people felt isolated and impotent as

individuals voluntary associations created new identities of belonging. [15] This type of 'latent' function of the voluntary association is notoriously difficult to validate, and much reliance is placed by historians and sociologists on logical inference. Of particular relevance for our understanding of social change, however, is an examination of the bases of common interests which enabled cooperation between diverse social groups.

This is one aspect of the organisation and cultural production of social relationships, which we identified above as our second main field of analysis. Collective action by voluntary association participants on matters of common interest was a means of expressing and forming new relationships of power in urban society. This power was produced both materially and ideologically. In material terms, subscriptions and donations were collected annually to give Societies a permanent financial account which engendered public confidence. Loans and credit could be raised on the basis of such confidence. Societies invested in properties such as schoolrooms, libraries, dispensaries and book depositories. Ownership of such building increased control over who had access to them and how they were run. In ideological terms, the language which voluntary societies used in annual reports, rules and regulations, and public appeals defined the kind of relationships which members had between themselves, with potential supporters, with other sources of authority and with the 'objects' of their charities. They also deployed concepts and values which provided the wider community with reference points as to how Society should be socially ordered. Ideology was also materially produced. [16] In the practices of, for example, distributing bibles or meal tickets and building and equipping schools, relationships of

power were assimilated and implicitly acknowledged by both givers and receivers of charity.

We are implying here that power is a relationship rather than a mechanistic capability or facility. [17] We wish to avoid a subjectivist approach to the study of power which attributes power to conscious agency such that it can be located in particular subjects. [18] Rather, we wish to understand the character of power and how it is exercised. In particular, in examining the material and cultural practices of voluntary associations we wish to see how evaluations and perceptions of a problematic social reality were mediated and negotiated between social groups. The effect of these processes was an organisation of consent to specific interests and social structures which were represented as normative. [19]

Voluntary association activists were what Gramsci called 'organic intellectuals'. [20] They defined their values and aims so as to allow them to act in consistent ways. They created an awareness of the role of their members in Society. They articulated the relationship between property-owning urban inhabitants and the labouring population. In producing a moral-intellectual framework for understanding and affirming the social structure they facilitated the conduct of unequal economic relations whereby a moralised, industrious, respectful workforce might be persuaded to accept the disciplines of a market economy.

The participants of the voluntary associations studied here were overwhelmingly drawn from the increasingly numerically and economically important middle classes whose interests were tied to the town. [21] Their articulation of relationships of power through such institutions operated in the context of inaccessible formal

structures of government. The town council and magistracy of Edinburgh was a self-perpetuating oligarchy. The Faculty of Advocates, whose entrants were overwhelmingly from landed or professional backgrounds, had, at certain points during the eighteenth century, the character of a para-parliament. [22] The Church of Scotland claimed precedence in religious affairs and had an important role in the allocation of poor relief and education. Voluntary associations legitimised many new positions of influence for broader sections of the community who had been excluded from formal institutions of power.

However, voluntary association formation cannot be sufficiently interpreted as a manifestation of the 'rise of the middle class'. An examination of the internal structures of these organisations reveals an unequal distribution of status and authority. In their rules, procedures at meetings and in the language of public appeals Societies were rather selective about which social categories they most wished to associate with and which had most influence. Generally, voluntary association members were highly deferential to traditionally elite groups such as lawyers, clerics, bankers and landowners. Such people frequently appear on lists of committees of directors or extraordinary directors. Thus, relationships within and between voluntary associations will also be a useful focus of analysis.

In our discussion of the definition and articulation of relationships of power and the role of 'organic intellectuals' we have hinted that the effects of cultural production had implications for the creation of social identities. Voluntary associations are particularly suitable diagnostics for the study of social identities

since we are entitled to infer that membership reveals an affirmation of the aims and interests of the Society and an affinity with other affiliates within the context of the Society's definition and aims. To this extent, the language which appealed to people to join and the interests expressed by the Societies are relevant indicators of affirmation of identity.

We must be careful not to presuppose the types of social identities formed during the development of voluntary associations. One possible outcome of the social practices of voluntary associations is the emergence of the middle class as a cohesive, self-aware social formation with a shared sense of distinctive mutual interests and cultural values. For the common interests of particular associations to amount to class interests members had to feel part of an interlocking network of social practices which reflected, informed and reproduced common social, economic and political experiences in ways which distinguished them from the interests and experiences of the working classes.

Therefore, the thesis is a contribution to the growing interest in the coalescence of the British middle class. Recent studies have suggested diversity in the social structure of the middle class and varying effects on middle class consciousness according to different types of urban environment. [23] Research has thrown into question what middle class unity consists of and what the relationship is between local institutions, practices and interests and a cohesive national class.

Edinburgh seems an important addition to the growing number of case studies. It is useful to compare and contrast the Scottish experience of social formation. [24] In particular what were the

features and identities of men and women of property in a town which was both a province of London and a national metropolis? Some contemporaries regarded it as a "widowed metropolis", stripped of metropolitan institutions and abandoned by its intellectual elite. [25] In this context we may ask what strategies were employed for exercising what Cockburn called "home employed, public, practical power"? [26] To what extent did the expression and institutionalisation of power affect identities of nativist civic pride as much as class?

The choice of period is also a useful point of comparison. Several studies argue that the religious, status and political divisions of the middle class give way to a growing unity of class interest in the mid-late nineteenth century. [27] This study assumes that social formation is a long-run process and seeks to identify coherencies in the articulation of values and social attitudes, and consistent patterns of social behaviour from the late eighteenth century. We shall do so by, occasionally, examining responses to major events such as the Tron Riot of 1812-13. However, our study of social formation will largely rely on analysis of 'mundane' events - the periodic distribution of a predictable annual report or the attendance of a sub-committee meeting - which by 1820 were part of the everyday life and common sense of the active citizen.

In the next chapter we will sketch the social structure of Edinburgh in the early nineteenth century in order that we may understand the prevailing socio-economic conditions which shaped the form and content of voluntary association practice and ideology. In Chapter Three, we seek to contextualise the significance of the institutionalisation of nineteenth-century voluntary associations by

contrasting salient characteristics of earlier Societies. In the next chapter, we develop the theme of institutionalisation by analysing the formation and development of the Society for the Suppression of Begging which created an interlocking network of practices for identifying and defining poverty. The case study is also useful for examining relationships between the voluntary sector and the local state. In Chapters Five and Six we examine the cultural significance of the aims and organisation of two types of Societies which sought to influence the relationships between classes in two key areas of public life: religion and education. In Chapter Seven we shall detail more precisely the social composition of a variety of selected types of voluntary association and explore the relationships between each membership, and the relationships between them and formal governmental organisations such as the town council. Finally, we shall draw together coherent themes arising from the disparate voluntary associations we will study and explain their significance for the social formation of the middle class in Edinburgh.

ENDNOTES

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11. J.N. Kerri, 'Studying voluntary associations as adaptive mechanisms: a review of anthropological perspectives', Current Anthropology, vol.17 (1976) pp.23-34.

12. Rules of the Edinburgh Auxiliary Missionary Society [including address to the public], Edinburgh, 1813, p.5.

13. We shall follow Weber in assuming that status is closely linked to class or market position. "Property as such is not always recognised as a status qualification, but in the long run it is, and with extraordinary regularity"; Max Weber, 'Class, status and party' in R.S. Neale (ed), History and Class: essential readings in theory and interpretation, Oxford, Blackwell, 1983, p.64.

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17. Steven Lukes, Power: a radical view, London, MacMillan, 1974.

18. David Couzens Hoy, 'Power, repression, progress: Foucault, Lukes and the Frankfart School', in Hoy (ed), Foucault: a critical reader, Oxford, Blackwell, 1986, pp.123-148.

19. We are here drawing on Gramsci's notion of hegemony which describes power being exercised coercively as well as through intellectural and moral leadership. For Gramsci, hegemony was exercised through and objectified in 'civil' institutions such as voluntary associations. See, Joseph V. Femia, Gramsci's Political Thought: hegemony, consciousness and the revolutionary process, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1981; T.J. Jackson Lewes, 'The concept of cultural hegemony: problems and possibilities', American Historical Review, v. 90, no. 3, June 1985, pp.567-593.

20. Antonio Gramsci, Selections from Prison Notebooks, trans. Q. Hoare and G. Nowell-Smith, London, Lawrence and Wishart, 1971, pp.5-23.

21. R.J. Morris, 'The middle class and British towns and cities of the industrial revolution, 1780-1870', in Derek Fraser and Anthony Sutcliffe (eds), The Pursuit of Urban History, London, Edward Arnold, 1983, pp.286-305 examines the relationship between urbanization and the middle class.

22. N.T. Phillipson, 'Lawyers, landowners and the civic leadership of post-Union Scotland', Juridical Review (1976) pp.97-120.

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27. For example, Philip Hills, 'Division and cohesion in the nineteenth-century middle class: the case of Ipswich 1830-1870', Urban History Yearbook (1987), pp.42-50; Patrick Joyce, Work, Society and Politics: the culture of the factory in later Victorian England, Sussex, Harvester, 1980, p.xxiii.

CHAPTER TWO

THE SOCIAL STRUCTURE OF EDINBURGH IN THE EARLY NINETEETH CENTURY

> The blue waters lay calm and motionless. The opposite shores glowed in a thousand varied tints of wood and plain, rock and mountain, cultured field and purple moor. Beneath, the old town reared its dark brow, and the new one stretched its golden lines; while all around the varied charms of nature lay scattered in that profusion which nature's hand alone can bestow ..... "You see that prospects to nae advantage the day, miss", said (Baillie Broadfoot) "If the glass-houses had been workin' it would have looked as weel again".
>
> Susan Ferrier, Marriage, 1818.

Introduction: Theoretical Perspectives

This chapter seeks to outline the social structure of Edinburgh in the early 19th Century. The tendency for case studies to treat social structure perfunctorily as background description is to be avoided. In this section we shall explicitly articulate the analytical assumptions made in the use of the concept of social structure, and explain the central relevance of social structure for the themes dealt with in this thesis.

In using the concept of social structure we are assuming that, as historians, it is possible to observe certain regularities in social behaviour and social relationships. The persons engaged in these social actions may themselves perceive regularities and continuities in social behaviour and relationships, and their effects. Such perceptions may be used by social actors to make sense of and guide aspirations. [1] Thus, we are using the concept of social structure in a broad way which allows us to identify, describe and analyse coherent social formations and identities.

The implications of our use of the concept requires further theoretical elaboration. The metaphorical connotations of 'structural', insofar as its usage is intended figuratively, have caused great confusion in social research. Its use is often associated with models of analysis which are static and deterministic. There is the concomitant danger that 'the structure' becomes reified. One such influential type of model is the functionalist in which the structure is regarded as a set of norms which reflect the empirical reality of social life. [2] This thesis eschews such a perspective. Our understanding of structure is characterised by the dynamism of social actions and their effects.

Social processes are considered 'structural' in the sense that we are seeking to clarify mutuality and persistence in their operation. [3]

Social relationships are a shifting pattern of alignment, conflict and accommodation. The social structure is regarded here as providing a guiding framework which influences, but does not necessarily determine, those formations. In one sense the social structure provides practical limits to social practices and thought. In another the social structure shapes the meanings by which people make sense of their lives. The thought and actions mediated by the social structure can contribute to its reproduction, and, at certain times, to its radical change.

Our difficulty as historical observers lies in only being able to examine social structure while it is operating (i.e. as individuals and groups engage in activity and interact). [4] This methodological difficulty is exacerbated in historical research by the dearth of appropriate data which would indicate specific relationships between underlying circumstances, overt actions, consciousness, and so on. Nevertheless, in order to guide our focus on where we might identify social alignments and antagonisms, it will be useful to suggest four main kinds of activity which are assumed to operate persistently in a way which influenced the conjuncture of social relationships in 19th century Edinburgh.

Firstly, there is the sphere of production, involving the accumulation of property and appropriating the surplus value of labour. The productive process involved various forms of relationships of power at the workplace and in the wider community. Secondly, the consumption of goods manifested itself in the display (sometimes monopolisation) of valued attributes in a 'style of life'.

This gave rise to what we shall refer to as status groups. Thirdly, the creation and development of formal civic institutions including political parties, churches and, increasingly in our period, voluntary associations. These provided a focus for the expression of identity and a basis for the exercise of power. Finally, the development of ideological perspectives through social interaction, the creation of media channels (such as the published reports of voluntary associations) and through language itself. [5] Certain ideas and meanings created particular kinds of consciousness which arose out of the social structure and contributed to its reproduction. [6]

Such key types of actions produce a non-static structure within which relationships of power are negotiated. The structure conditions, but does not absolutely determine, the trajectory and manifestations of these negotiations of power.

It is within this framework of analysis that the town is a relevant focus of study. We do not wish to isolate the town as a discrete entity. Weber's typological method has sometimes been interpreted too narrowly to create the notion of the town as a self-maintaining total systemic unit. Others, following the Chicago School of Sociologists of the 1920s, have construed an 'ecological' view of the urban community which functions as a result of the interdependence of its various elements. [7] We shall reject such notions. Although we recognise the town as producing particular concentrations of economic power and parallel patterns of social formations, the town's markets and social alignments can only be fully understood in a regional and national context. Certain Weberian-influenced sociologists recognise relationships between the

local state and central authority, the interconnectedness between cities in distribution, production, dealing and consumption, and struggles for power between the landed gentry and the urban bourgeoisie. [8]

In the 19th century, the town was a crucial arena in which relationships of subordination and domination were negotiated. The town was not merely the manifestation or effect of these social processes. The environment of the town - its factories, workshops, residences, markets, cultural institutions, and so on - were of a specific physical and cultural form which related to the form which social relationships took. Moreover, contemporaries themselves invested the town with meaning and felt their interests tied to those of the town. They organised at the level of the town and contested power within its limits.[9] This identity is demonstrated by the voluntary associations of the period carrying the town name in their title.

It is worth noting here that, although the middle class were aware of an affinity with the town and their interests were tied up with its social form, at the beginning of the 19th century the concept of the town as a discrete social and constitutional entity with definitive spatial and administrative boundaries was imperfectly formed. In the case of Edinburgh, the ancient limits of the royalty were extended under the provision of a series of Acts of Parliament (notably 1767, 1785 and 1809). The distinction, in administrative terms at least, between the ancient and extended royalty (the so-called Old and New Town), was maintained well into the 19th century. Also, a good deal of housing was built in the late 18th and early 19th century which was outside the burgh of Edinburgh. These extra-

burghal districts included the parish of St. Cuthberts which the 1811 Census showed had 38,763 inhabitants. Such districts were exempt from certain taxes, most notably the annuity tax. Other subordinate districts of Edinburgh had a certain administrative autonomy as a result of legal and constitutional precedent. The Canongate had its own revenue from petty customs and market dues and its own Stent masters until the 1830s, as well as autonomy in police matters until the 1812 Police Act brought more coherence. Portsburgh had more limited autonomy, but its inhabitants objected to being incorporated into Edinburgh by the Municipal Reform Act of 1835. [10] Leith was quite distinct from Edinburgh in administrative, economic and social terms, a fact recognised by the 1832 parliamentary boundary commissioners.

Up to the 1830s, when the reports of the parliamentary boundary commissioners and the municipal corporations commissioners gave constitutional coherence to 'Edinburgh', a range of collective middle class action in areas such as poor relief, education and public order sought to cut across local boundaries. Part of the role of voluntary associations was to focus and to designate the geographical area within which citizens were to be held responsible for the well-being of urban society.

'Edinburgh', then, is more than a merely convenient analytical category. Its boundaries and built environment were created by specific forms of social action. The material presence of the town embodied and facilitated the reproduction of relationships of social power. [11] We concur with David Harvey that space does not have absolute definition but, under capitalism, it is treated as if it does, becoming homogenised and capable of being valued. Under such

artificial definition it becomes useable, malleable and susceptible to domination. [12]

This thesis is concerned in particular with the creation and development of voluntary associations in the late 18th and early 19th century. Within their own membership and in their relations with other sections of society, these organisations, in different ways, were involved in the assertion, legitimation and exercising of power. Their creation was a component of a network of social practices which constituted a social structure. As they increased in number, widened their membership and clarified their aims, they became part of the fabric of localised agencies through which the middle class could articulate their aspirations coherently. There was an increasing perception on the part of the middle class themselves of the regularities of their actions and consistencies in their societal view (as expressed, for example, in their annual reports). These perceptions were used to give meaning to their lives.

While it is being suggested that the development of voluntary associations was part of the production of a social structure, it is equally the case that their form and content, their institutional organisation and ideology were shaped by the prevailing set of economic and cultural practices which we call social structure. Both these suggestions provide the main justification for sketching in this chapter the principal forms of economic organisation in early 19th century Edinbugh, drawing on information about the occupations of its wealthiest inhabitants. We shall place emphasis on the period 1810-1820.

Contemporary Perspectives

Initially, it will be useful to discuss contemporary perceptions

of what we now call 'social structure' since they contain important value judgements about the ordering of Society and social relations. A number of themes are recurrent from this qualitative evidence. Firstly, men writing about towns in the late 18th and early 19th century define the distinctiveness of the town and describe its characteristics in terms of its 'principal inhabitants'. Secondly, although such individuals are thought of in terms of their personal character (refined, polite, cultivated), in centres of consumption like Edinburgh, there is at least an implicit recognition of their economic importance (as a group) as consumers of services within the town. Thirdly, such writers tended to locate other social groups in the social structure in relation to the principal inhabitants. In a town of the Edinburgh type there was emphasis on how craftsmen and shopkeepers were dependent on the urban elite and gentry to purchase their goods and services. These perceptions are important for the purposes of this thesis because they provide not just a description of the 'state of society' but also a normative view of how that Society should be ordered. Town histories, guides and gazetteers were contemporary social commentaries published to glorify and advertise the town to a wider national audience. Yet their perceptions of the town were reproduced in the countless committee meetings and annual reports of the voluntary associations discussed in this thesis.

Early writings about towns tended to perceive them as discrete entities. The main formal institutions, principal events in its history and the prominent inhabitants were regarded as attributes of the town's character. Hugo Arnot's History of Edinburgh, published in 1779, is of this kind. However, Arnot was aware of variations in

the populations of different kinds of towns. In order to estimate the population he regarded the climate, the constitution and manner of living of the inhabitants, whether the town had country farmers or mechanics, and "whether there be also a mixture of families of rank and opulence" as his analytical variables. [13] In noting the 'station and pursuits' of the people of Edinburgh, he draws attention to the lack of manufacturing industry and regarded the town as "not considerable for trade". He stated that the town "depended chiefly for its support upon the colleges of justice, the seminaries of education and the inducements ... it affords to genteel people to reside in it". [14] His perception of the higher ranks supporting the town is complemented by his notion that the economic activities which go on in the town are directed towards the benefit of the elite - indicated by his revealing comment that the indolence of mechanics and labourers meant that the higher ranks "cannot get themselves decently served". [15]

Writing in 1806, Robert Forsyth had a similar perspective on what determined the social characteristics of the town. "The state of society in Edinburgh", he wrote, "is such as naturally results from the class of persons by whom it is inhabited or frequented". [16] Forsyth noted that, "... families of the nobility and gentry whose fortunes do not enable them to encounter the expense of a residence in London, resort to this city for the enjoyment of Society, and for the education of their children. Hence persons of rank and title abound in Edinburgh". [17] Youngson remarks on the flourishing of an exclusive elite social life up to about 1815, after which time it became fashionable for minor gentry to live in the country and perhaps have a town house in London. [18] By 1825, only

the Earl of Wemyss and the Earl of Caithness as 'persons of title' had Edinburgh town houses.

This was not simply a matter of setting a social tone. Forsyth was aware that the wealthy inhabitants, as consumers of service goods, were engaged in a particular kind of economic relationship with the labouring population which had the effect of, as he saw it, reducing social antagonisms. Artisans and shopkeepers were "... employed in supplying the wants and the luxuries of the numerous class of wealthy inhabitants that have either a temporary or permanent residence here". [19] Forsyth judged that "the lower class of inhabitants in Edinburgh are upon the whole of a very regular and decent character".

Forsyth, however, drew no explicit link between economic structures and their effect on social relationships between classes. It was not until the 1820s that writers began to distinctively characterise towns according to types of social structure, and then, by crude induction, to formalise general laws about class relationships. Thomas Chalmers contrasted the antagonisms of manufacturing towns with social relations in towns, such as Edinburgh, where "... the great mass of the population are retained in kindly and immediate dependence on the wealthy residents of the place ... This brings the two extreme orders of society into that sort of relationship which is highly favourable to the general blandness and tranquillity of the whole population". [20] Much of this thesis will be about ways in which wealthy residents sought to create, maintain and express relationships of 'kindly and immediate dependence' in the fields of charitable poor relief, religion, education, and policing.

Our theoretical considerations of social structure, the relevance of the urban environment and contemporary perceptions of urban society will guide what we study in this chapter and the way in which data is analysed and interpreted. In particular, our concern with observable regularities and persistence in social actions will lead us to categorise information about individuals and draw inferences about wealth, status and social relationships of groups of Society. We shall begin by contextualising quantitative data about the Edinburgh middle class, by looking briefly at the population of Edinburgh in our period.

Population

Reliable population statistics for our period are not available. [21] Sir John Sinclair's Statistical Account of Scotland of 1791 gives a figure for Edinburgh of 84,886. This estimate, relying on the returns of parish ministers, was certainly an understatement. It excluded, for example, lodgers in some parishes. [22]

The population censuses for the years 1801-1831 gave the following returns:

Year	Edinburghshire (parishes outside Edinburgh)	Edinburgh (City and Suburbs)
1801	40,394	82,560
1811	45,620	102,987
1821	53,279	138,235
1831	57,436	161,909

That the 1801 census figure was less than Sinclair's earlier estimate was met with incredulity by contemporaries, who had witnessed a huge expansion of building in the city. [23] Whatever the defects of the figures, the general indication is of a rapidly expanding city

population, both in absolute terms and as a proportion of the surrounding country. The fastest rate of increase is in the decade 1811-1821.

Social Structure and the Post Office Directory

Some quantitative evidence of the Edinburgh Social Structure and the composition of the Edinburgh middle class was found in samples of the Post Office Directories. It is necessary to be aware of the nature of this source in order to judge its representativeness in providing a picture of social and economic patterns in Edinburgh. [24]

At one level directories were one reflection of a developing awareness of the town as a discrete area of social and economic activity. In itemising and classifying persons and places directories provided contemporaries with definition and order in an increasingly complex urban environment. [25]

The list of names in the Edinburgh and Leith Post Office Directories was described on the title page as "An alphabetical arrangement of the noblemen, private gentlemen, merchants, traders and others, in the City and Suburbs of Edinburgh and Leith with their residences". The directory had a straightforward commerical function, providing travellers, visitors and inhabitants with information on where to find merchants, traders and professional men. At the same time, inclusion in the directory carried implications of local status. The listing included titled persons and those of independent income. We may deduce that such persons were of sufficient status for them to be sought in the guide by persons from outside Edinburgh.

The Edinburgh directories had been compiled by an official of

the Post Office since 1773. It is fair to assume that he would be well placed to gauge which inhabitants were most frequently contacted by letter. Also, the direct survey method which the Post Office employed would provide a more complete listing than those compilations in other towns which relied on second-hand reporting or responses to local advertisement.

The samples below are not, therefore, indicative of the Edinburgh social structure as a whole. Rather, it provides an impression of the relative numerical importance of businesses of the largest size and professions whose goods and services were the most sought after, and persons of such social standing that their whereabouts were thought to be worth knowing.

As the table below shows, the size of the Directory did not increase greatly over the decade 1810-1820. [26] Indeed, as a proportion of the census population totals, there is a decrease over the decade of persons listed in the Directory from 7.8% to 6.3%. It is not clear whether such a change reflects actual changes in the social structure or less comprehensiveness in the work of the Directory compilers.

Approximate Number of Entries in the Post Office Directory, 1810-20

Year	Number	Year	Number	Year	Number	Year	Number	Year	Number
1810	8004	1811	8091	1812	8250	1813	8410	1814	8555
1815	8642	1816	8410	1817	8468	1818	8512	1819	8540
1820	8680								

Our main concern was with the nature of the Edinburgh economy and the social composition of the middle class at the beginning of the decade - a time which witnessed a significant increase in public participation in voluntary associations. It was assumed that

inferences drawn from the occupational titles of people listed in the directory would provide an operational profile of the nature of the services and products which the labour and investment of the middle class contributed, the nature of the production process in which they were involved and the nature of relationships with other social groups. Since the information for the Directory had to be collected before publication, the 1811-12 directory was likely to give the most accurate picture of the year 1810. It was also decided to analyse information from the 1812-13 directory. This would provide a profile of the middle class on the eve of the riot of January 1812 which, as we shall see, tapped pervasive fears of disorder and engendered a cohesive response by the middle class in the provision of poor relief, the suppression of begging, the provision of education and religious instruction.

The use of occupational titles from the Post Office Directories allowed us to observe two of the four areas of social activity which we suggested above operated with sufficient persistence as to contribute to the social structure - the sphere of production (and distribution and retailing) and the creation of status groups (insofar as status was implied by occupational title). The choice of years had relevance to the wider concerns and aims of the thesis.

A simple systematic sampling approach was adopted. An entry in the directory was picked at random from the first ten entries. Then, every tenth entry was extracted. This method meant that the initial random selection predetermined the number and the identity of the other entries. The directory was an alphabetical listing by surname - the principle of its ordering was not influenced by the characteristic under analysis.

The frequency of the occupational titles which each item of the samples displayed was analysed. It is necessary to be aware of what sort of information was (and was not) implied by the occupational title. The nature and purpose of the source influenced the way in which occupation was recorded. [27] The nature of the Directory suggested that in many cases the occupational title did not refer directly to the activity which 'occupied' that person. In particular, the extent to which an individual input labour and/or invested capital in a trade is often unclear. Whereas an occupational title might refer merely to an area of the economy in which that person had a financial interest, certain occupations (particularly skilled trades) were typically characterised by a mix of labour and capital.

In providing answers to a number of other key questions the occupational titles are tantalisingly imprecise. How much capital was deployed in a particular trade? What level of technology was used in the production process? How many employees did the person have? There was often ambiguity as to whether the title implied manufacturing, wholesale distribution or retailing. In certain trades more than one of these economic functions could be combined. In certain cases a generic term might be given rather than a particular branch of a trade (e.g. 'builder' might mean plasterer). The function of public advertisement, which the Directory performed, obviated this danger to some extent since it was necessary to give accurate information to potential customers or clients. On the other hand, the 'social register' function of the Directory potentially induced people to exaggerate or obscure their economic status (thus many 'merchants' were merely shopkeepers).

Acknowledging these weaknesses which arose from the nature of the source, it was decided to cautiously proceed to create meaningful categories from the occupational titles. These categories would only be meaningful if they had relevance to the wider aims of the thesis. The most important consideration was what the occupational title implied about the nature of the social relationships likely to be produced by a particular kind of economic activity. Therefore, categories were created on the basis of the organisation and nature of the work implied by the occupational title. [28]

In the absence of detailed economic data, it was necessary to be guided by general historical accounts of economic development in the early 19th century. [29] Two main points were recognised. Firstly, in the manufacturing process, large units of fixed capital were atypical, the craft workshops being the most common form of 'factory'. Secondly, the division of labour in the early 19th century was imperfect. The production and retailing of craft goods was frequently combined. Certain retailers, particularly in the food sector, possessed skill in the processing of semi-finished goods. Thus, following Morris, a category of 'distribution and processing' was created separately from one of 'dealers' (where processing seemed to be explicitly not implied by the title) and 'commerce' (where larger units of circulating or finance capital were implied). The occupational classification also distinguished between craft production and titles which implied manufacturing on a larger scale (such as brewing).

Post Office Directories, 1811-12 and 1812-13
Occupational Classification

Occupation	Frequency (1811)	Frequency (1812)	% (1811)	% (1812)
Craft	145	158	18.01	19.51
Distribution and Processing	113	122	14.04	15.06
Legal	78	73	9.69	9.01
Dealing	66	69	8.20	8.52
Furnished Lodgings	59	48	7.33	5.93
Commerce	38	45	4.72	5.56
Miscellaneous Services	33	33	4.10	4.01
Manufacturing	18	16	2.24	1.98
National Government	11	16	1.37	1.98
Transport	12	15	1.49	1.85
Medicine	12	13	1.49	1.60
Banking	4	11	0.50	1.36
Defence	14	11	1.74	1.36
Religion	7	0	0.87	0.00
Other Professions	13	7	1.61	0.86
Local Government	6	6	0.74	0.74
Construction	10	5	1.24	0.62
Clerks	4	2	0.50	0.25
Gardeners	3	2	0.37	0.25
Agriculture	1	1	0.12	0.12
Agents	4	1	0.50	0.12
Quarries	1	0	0.12	0.00
No Occupational Title	140	158	17.39	19.51
Double Occupations	13	0	1.61	0.00
Totals	805	810	100.00	100.00

A number of points require emphasis. Firstly, Edinburgh's role as a centre of consumption is reflected by the high proportions of both samples having no occupational title. [30] This implied that they had some source of independent income, perhaps of a rentier nature. Secondly, the nature of Edinburgh as a centre of trade and elite culture which people would visit temporarily is reflected by the large number of persons deriving income by renting furnished accommodation. This was a deployment of capital particularly common among women.

Thirdly, we should note the large section of the samples engaged in the processing and distribution of goods in response to the

potentially high consumptive capacity of the urban elite. In defining Edinburgh within a typology of cities, Weber's notion of the 'princely city' is helpful. In such a city, "the presence in residence of large consumers of special economic character is of decisive importance for the local tradesmen and merchants". [31]

Fourthly, a much larger proportion of the middle class were engaged in manufacturing than might be assumed from the impressionistic accounts of authors such as Hugo Arnot or Robert Forsyth, who wrote of Edinburgh in a eulogistic way as a place whose social tone was dominated by the literati and the professions. Craft manufacturing was the most common form of manufacturing production - typically involving relatively small units of capital. The journeyman/apprentice/master structure was characteristic of the form of the organisation of labour. This organisation implied a close supervision and control of the workforce by the master. The craft manufacturer in many trades would combine production with selling. He was less likely to have his workplace separate or far removed from his residence.

Finally, we may note how the legal profession clearly outnumbers all other professions. However, as we shall discover, their numbers in Edinburgh Society as a whole are far fewer than one would expect from their proportional dominance of public institutions. A similar comment can be made for the 'commerce' grouping.

As we have already discussed, these figures are based on a source which was as much a social register as a commercial listing. In order to get a clearer picture of the large productive economic units in Edinburgh it was decided to extract all 'firms' from the

directory. This involved extracting all entries which implied relatively large units of capital and/or substantial employment of labour. Entries which implied capital formation by economic partnership were counted (e.g. 'Smith and Jones' or 'Smith and Co.'). [32] Entries in which the physical description of the business appeared to imply a large unit of fixed or circulating capital were also counted (e.g. 'Manchester and Glasgow Warehouse', 'Edinburgh Foundry', 'Caledonian Glassworks'). By adopting such rules it was hoped to identify most of the substantial economic units. The relative proportion of such firms, according to the occupational classification described above, was as follows:

Economic Classification of Edinburgh Firms, 1811-12 and 1812-13

Economic Sector	Frequency (1811)	Frequency (1812)	% (1811)	% (1812)
Craft Manufacturing	112	130	25.3	31.9
Distribution and Processing	84	72	19.0	17.7
Commerce	83	63	18.7	15.5
Professions	44	47	9.9	11.5
Dealing	35	33	7.9	8.1
Manufacturing	37	33	8.4	8.1
Banking and Insurance	11	16	2.5	3.9
Agents	6	9	1.4	2.2
Construction	5	2	1.1	0.5
Transport	2	2	0.5	0.5
Double Occupations	24	0	5.4	0.0
Totals	443	407	100.0	100.0

In this indicator of Edinburgh's economic structure, craft manufacturing is by far the most common type of production. Within the 'craft' category, tailoring and the clothing trades (especially shoemaking, millinery and stockingmaking) were most common (41 out of 112 in 1811 and 31 out of 130 in 1812). Next in numerical importance was printing. Stark reported that in 1819 there were 47 printing houses in Edinburgh employing 150 presses. This compared with a

figure of 21 printing houses in 1790 and 40 in 1805. A further indicator of the increasing numbers employed in this trade over the decade is that between 1810 and 1819, 140 members joined the Society of Journeymen Printers in Edinburgh, compared with only 40 between 1800 and 1809. [34] The increase is all the more impressive given the low affiliation to the Society in the economically depressed years of 1817 and 1818. Printing houses often incorporated the functions of bookbinding and publishing.

The leather trades were also significant (16 firms in the 1812-13 Directory), manufacturing goods both for the luxury market at home and for export. [35] The tanneries appear to have been located on the outskirts of the city, but the currying workshops (conditioning the leather) were quite common within its bounds.

The surveys produced nine firms in 1811 and 14 firms in 1812 engaged in the manufacture of plate and jewellery. In this trade there was a separation between making and selling, with masters having their own workshops and providing goods by contract to one or more merchants.

Although the number of building firms was small, there was a well-developed division of labour in this sector. Trades ancilliary to the building industry, such as painting, glazing and plumbing, were subsumed under the 'craft' heading.

Diversity was an important feature of the survey, firms included artificial flowermakers, musical instrument makers and fishing rod makers.

Firms engaged in the distribution and processing of goods formed 19% and 17.7% respectively of the two surveys. The dominance of the clothing trades in craft manufacturing was parelleled by the 21 firms

(4.74%) of dealers in dress items in 1811, increasing to 29 firms (7.1%) in 1812. The next largest dealing sector is food with 17 and 22 firms respectively. The term 'grocers' embraced a wide range of wealth and status. Also of numerical importance were booksellers and/or stationers (mirroring the importance of printing).

Our assumption that 'merchants' were generally men of relatively large units of fixed or circulating capital seems justified in the light of their high numbers in the surveys of firms. Thus, if we have regard to large economic units, commercial capitalists outstrip professionals, retailers and manufacturers in terms of numerical importance. The occupational title was mostly ambiguous as to the goods in which they traded, the general term 'merchant' being the most frequent.

Firms engaged in the dealing of goods show up in almost the same proportions as in our original sample. The most common activity was spirit dealing. It is clear that the Edinburgh market provided many middle class people, either individually or in partnerships, the opportunity to exploit the regular demand for goods provided by the large bourgeois presence in the city. This regular demand was an essential precondition required to offset the heavy initial capital outlay of a fixed retailing unit. [36]

This form of retailing was gradually taking the place of the open-air market. The architectural and environment changes which had taken place since the late 18th century, such as the widening of the South Bridge connecting the Old and New Towns, created a more comfortable shopping milieu. [37] Shopkeepers had a material interest in issues such as lighting, street cleansing, policing and the suppression of beggars. This was symbolised in William Calder's

Provostship in 1811 - a trader with shops throughout the city.

The figures for manufacturing firms (8.4% and 8.1%) are more than might be assumed from dilettante accounts of 'refined' Edinburgh, although they are smaller than those for the professions. Some of the entries put in the manufacturing category may not have been very large employers or have had very substantial plant (e.g. the dyers). On the other hand, in common with other urban areas, much large scale manufacturing production took place on the outskirts of the town and, therefore, may not have been entered in the directory. Although only one firm of papermakers is noted from the surveys, Stark mentioned the presence of many large paper mills "in the environs of Edinburgh", and substantial production is suggested by the mention of two paper warehouses in the Directory. [38]

About one third of manufacturing firms in our surveys were brewers. Here again we must allow for the presence of small capitalists. The Scottish brewing industry in this period was numerically dominated by firms with a capital of a few hundred pounds, although Edinburgh had firms such as Youngers and Campbell and Campbell and Young who were above that of the average business. [39] In the archives of the City of Edinburgh there is a list of all Edinburgh brewers of significant size paying excise duty on beer in 1805. 42 brewers are mentioned. [40] The average annual duty paid, at a rate of two pennies on a pint of ale, was 121 pounds. This implies an average annual production of 14,520 pints per firm. However, there were wide variations. Youngers dominated the market - two entries for 'Younger and Co.' totalled excise duties of 479 pounds, and another for 'Wm. Younger' noted a duty of 396 pounds. Campbell and Young also had substantial output, indicated by an

annual excise duty of 393 pounds. However, 26 brewers were below the average excise duty figure and four brewers produced less than 2,000 pints of ale a year.

Finally, it should be acknowledged that the importance of banking and insurance cannot be inferred from a simple statement of the numerical importance of banking firms. During the 18th century, Scottish banking developed at a fast pace in relation to a weak manufacturing base. [41] By 1812, Edinburgh had nine private banks as well as the old established public banks - the Bank of Scotland, the Royal Bank of Scotland and the British Linen Bank. Edinburgh banks played a crucial role in mobilising capital for public works, and, as we shall see, they were an important guarantee of success for public voluntary associations.

The samples of the 1811-12 and 1812-13 Post Office Directories also coded occupational titles according to the industrial output grouping which the title implied. The intention was to demonstrate the broad outline of Edinburgh's economic strucutre. The occupational classification discussed above was concerned with certain social distinctions within the middle class, inferred from occupational titles which hinted information about the organisation of production and the way in which capital was deployed. The industrial classification is not directly concerned with social class, although it may be a component in a set of data which helps to locate social class. Rather it is concerned with the economic function of sample cases within an economic structure. Inferences may be made about the mutuality of interests between groups in the same sectors of the economy.

The method and principles of industrial classification developed

by W.A. Armstrong have been used. [42] A major advantage of using this approach is the potential it provides for comparability with other studies.

Two cautionary points require emphasis. The economic function of the sample cases need to be interpreted within the framework of assumptions derived from the nature of the source of the data. Early 19th century social surveys conflated the notion of occupation as activity and occupation as source of income. Unlike census data which covers the majority of the economically active population, the Post Office Directories listed mainly people who were the owners of the means of production, distribution and exchange. The use of the directory to delineate economic activity carries the assumption that the people listed were representative of wider groups of industrial occupations, while accepting that they themselves may not have been engaged in a particular activity except insofar as they deployed capital or employed labour in that sector.

Secondly, the occupational classification adopted by R.J. Morris had usefully taken account of the imperfect division of labour in the first half of the 19th century. The Armstrong-Booth classification is less well equipped for this. In particular, the identification of trades which may have involved a combination of distributive and processing functions, and the distinguishing of craft manufacturing (which in certain cases may have combined distribution) is lacking. As with all coding and classification we were prepared to trade loss of information for the creation of meaningful categories. The analysis of industrial classification produced the following result:

Industrial Classification of the Post Office Directories, 1811-12 and 1812-13

Industrial Sector	Frequency (1811)	Frequency (1812)	% (1811)	% (1812)
Agriculture - farming	3	2	0.37	0.25
Agriculture - breeding	2	6	0.25	0.74
Mining	1	0	0.12	0.00
Building - management	16	11	1.99	1.36
Building - operative	9	21	1.12	2.59
Building - roadmaking	0	1	0.00	0.12
Manufacture - machinery	1	0	0.12	0.00
Manufacture - tools	8	4	0.99	0.49
Manufacture - iron and steel	7	11	0.87	1.36
Manufacture - copper/tin/lead	2	1	0.25	0.12
Manufacture - gold/silver/ jewellery	10	6	1.24	0.74
Manufacture - earthenware,etc.	1	0	0.12	0.00
Manufacture - coal/gas	0	1	0.00	0.12
Manufacture - chemical	1	1	0.12	0.12
Manufacture - fur/leather	1	1	0.12	0.12
Manufacture - glue/tallow	1	1	0.12	0.12
Manufacture - hair, etc.	2	2	0.25	0.25
Manufacture - wood workers	7	6	0.87	0.74
Manufacture - furniture	17	15	2.11	1.85
Manufacture - carriages	5	5	0.62	0.62
Manufacture - paper	2	0	0.25	0.00
Manufacture - floorcloth	0	1	0.00	0.12
Manufacture - woollens	1	0	0.12	0.00
Manufacture - cotton/silk	6	4	0.74	0.49
Manufacture - lace	1	0	0.12	0.00
Manufacture - dress	72	82	8.94	10.12
Manufacture - dress related		2	0.25	0.25
Manufacture - food preparation	1	4	0.12	0.49
Manufacture - baking	18	13	2.24	1.60
Manufacture - drink	4	3	0.50	0.37
Manufacture - smoking	0	1	0.00	0.12
Manufacture - watches/toys	4	7	0.50	0.86
Manufacture - printing/ bookbinding	9	16	1.12	1.97
Manufacture - unspecified	17	11	2.11	1.36
Transport - warehouses/docks	5	12	0.62	1.48
Transport - roads	12	12	1.49	1.48
Dealing - coals	1	0	0.12	0.00
Dealing - raw materials	4	4	0.50	0.49
Dealing - clothing materials	14	7	1.74	0.86
Dealing - dress	15	9	1.86	1.11
Dealing - food	27	50	3.35	6.17
Dealing - tobacco	4	5	0.50	0.62
Dealing - wines/spirits/hotels	45	44	5.59	5.43
Dealing - lodgings	59	48	7.33	5.92
Dealing - furniture	2	1	0.25	0.12
Dealing - stationery/ publications	10	8	1.24	0.99

Industrial Classification of the Post Office Directories, 1811-12 and 1812-13 (Cont.)

Industrial Sector	Frequency (1811)	Frequency (1812)	% (1811)	% (1812)
Dealing - house utensils/ ornaments	0	2	0.00	0.25
Dealing - general dealers	0	1	0.00	0.12
Dealing - unspecified	40	33	4.97	4.07
Industrial Services - banking/ insurance	17	19	2.11	2.34
Pub.Service/Prof. - admin. (central)	16	15	1.99	1.85
Pub.Service/Prof. - admin. (local)	2	7	0.25	0.86
Pub.Service/Prof. - army	13	9	1.61	1.11
Pub.Service/Prof. - navy	1	2	0.12	0.25
Pub.Service/Prof. - law	81	77	10.01	9.51
Pub.Service/Prof. - medicine	18	15	2.24	1.85
Pub.Service/Prof. - art (painting)	3	5	0.37	0.62
Pub.Service/Prof. - art (music)	1	1	0.12	0.12
Pub.Service/Prof. - literature	0	1	0.00	0.12
Pub.Service/Prof. - education	16	15	1.99	1.85
Pub.Service/Prof. - religion	7	0	0.87	0.00
Domestic Service	12	11	1.48	1.36
No Occupation	140	158	17.39	19.50
Double Occupations	9	0	1.12	0.00
Totals	805	810	100.00	100.00

Clearly, the cell sizes for most industrial sectors were too small for any significant conclusions to be drawn. However, we can point to several outstanding features. Within the manufacturing sector there is an overwhelming dominance of dress trades in both years. We may also note the relative importance of baking and the production of luxury goods such as furniture and jewellery. The main sub-groups of the distributive trades are food (especially in the 1812 sample), drink and lodgings. Unsurprisingly, we find law dominating the public service and professional sector, comprising around 10% of industry as a whole.

Leith

Separate samples were conducted from the Post Office Directories for Leith, whose residents were listed after those of Edinburgh. The same random sampling technique as before was employed. When classified according to occupation the results were rather different to those of Edinburgh.

Occupational Classification (Leith), Post Office Directories 1811-12 and 1812-13

Occupation	Frequency (1811)	Frequency (1812)	% (1811)	% (1812)
Commerce	22	29	18.49	23.58
Distribution and Processing	16	22	13.44	17.89
Craft	15	17	12.60	13.82
Dealing	16	16	13.44	13.00
Furnished Lodgings	3	5	2.52	4.07
Agents	1	5	0.84	4.07
Manufacturing	5	4	4.20	3.25
Miscellaneous Services	3	4	2.52	3.25
Legal	0	3	0.00	2.44
Religion	2	2	1.68	1.63
Local Government	1	2	0.84	1.63
National Government	1	2	0.84	1.63
Medical	0	2	0.00	1.63
Transport	12	2	10.08	1.63
Agriculture	1	2	0.84	1.63
Defence	1	1	0.84	0.81
Clerks	3	1	2.52	0.81
Double Occupations	3	0	2.52	0.00
Professions	0	1	0.00	0.81
No occupation	10	3	8.40	2.44
Totals	119	123	100.00	100.00

In Leith, men of commerce predominated, the retailing of spirits boosted the number of dealers and the professional middle class is considerably diminished. Few people were listed without an occupational title, suggesting few people of independent income in Leith.

A survey of Leith firms listed in the Post Office Directory of 1812-13 was conducted on the same principles as those for Edinburgh.

Of the 120 firms identified, 56 were partnerships of merchants or warehouses (in cases where the product was specified, wine and wood were the most frequent). There were also five shipping companies. There were twenty craft manufacturing firms, among which rope and sailmaking were predominant. Large scale manufacturing was proportionately more frequent as an occupational category than in Edinburgh. Thirteen firms were in this category, including the Leith Distillery, a sugar refinery, and two ship building firms.

Administratively distinct from Edinburgh, Leith also had a very different economic and social structure. In general, the interests of the bourgeoisie were directed towards the commerce of the port, rather than to the local market in the city of Edinburgh. It will emerge from this study of voluntary associations that the city of Edinburgh was the main basis of organisation for most societies, with parallel associations being set up independently in Leith. In Societies whose membership included inhabitants of Edinburgh and Leith, Leith participants were far fewer than those of Edinburgh, even allowing for relative population sizes.

A Classification of Wealthy Property Owners

In using information from the Edinburgh and Leith Post Office Directory we have made certain operational assumptions which have allowed us to identify, quantify and classify the middle class around 1812. Although it is possible to infer something about wealth and status from occupational descriptions, the directory was unhelpful in supplying direct information about the relative wealth of the middle class.

A list of persons owning property in Edinburgh valued at or above an annual rent of 100 Scots pounds in 1815 was a valuable

corrective to this deficiency. The Scots pound was about 8% of sterling in 1815. [43] The reasons for the compilation of the list by local government are obscure. It apparently had no administrative purpose and the 100 pound figure seems arbitrary. Yet this arbitrariness provides an important indication of social estimation. The compilers of the list were making a value judgement about the criteria for estimating who was an owner of property of important worth. The list reflects one contemporary notion of high status.

The source has several weaknesses. The information it provides is not given in a consistent form. Surnames, firstnames, occupations and address are given in various combinations for each entry. To overcome this difficulty, all entries in the list were checked against the Post Office Directory of 1815-16. Entries which had only recorded a surname stood little chance of being identified in the Directory, whereas entries which included residential and occupational information facilitated their identification in the Directory. There was, therefore, a random bias in the linkage process created by the inconsistency of the list of valuable property owners (V.P.O.). However, the linking of the list of V.P.O's. and the list of names in the Post Office Directory created a third list which contained consistent information about residence and occupation for each entry. Following the principles of unique name linkage (explained in chapter seven) the entries on the V.P.O. list where the identity of the individual was ambiguous (e.g. where surname only was given) could be systematically discounted. Of the 1417 entries on the V.P.O. List, 488 (34.4%) could not be successfully linked with the Post Office Directory.

Apart from information being recorded inconsistently by the town

council officials, it is clear that we are also at the mercy of sheer carelessness, 54 of the entries were duplicated. These were disregarded. Also, certain names are missing from the list which common sense tells us should have been included. However, it was assumed that such errors were not biased towards particular occupational categories.

A more serious weakness is the deliberate exclusion of persons who were legally exempt from local taxation. No lawyers were included in the list. Members of the Law Faculty were exempt from such taxes as poor rates and the annuity (for the support of ministers of the Established Church). Robert Forsyth in 1806 estimated the numbers in the legal profession at between 2,000 and 3,000; although our sample of the Post Office Directory would suggest this figure was exaggerated. [44] It is fair to assume that most lawyers would have owned property valuable enough to be included in the list.

The list includes only property within the ancient and extended royalty of the town (including the Canongate). Large districts, such as St. Cuthberts, exempt from taxes imposed by the town were excluded.

The distribution of occupational categories in the V.P.O. list is displayed in the table below. The column on the far right is an observed/expected ratio, calculated by dividing the frequency observed in this table by the frequency of the occupational title in the Post Office Directory sample.

Owners of Property with Annual Rent Valued at or above 100 Scots pound by Occupational Classification

Occupation	Frequency	%	O/E ratio
Craft	172	18.51	0.95
Distribution and Processing	153	16.47	1.09
Commerce	94	10.12	1.82
No Occupational Title	79	8.50	0.44
Dealing	48	5.17	0.61
Medicine	48	5.17	3.23
Defence	37	3.98	2.93
Manufacturing	28	3.01	1.52
Professions	27	2.91	3.38
Miscellaneous Services	27	2.91	0.73
National Government	27	2.91	1.47
Construction	24	2.58	4.16
Bankers	22	2.37	1.74
Religion	21	2.26	
Local Government	7	0.75	2.93
Agents	6	0.65	5.42
Furnished Lodgings	5	0.54	0.09
Transport	4	0.43	0.23
Agriculture	2	0.22	0.88
Gardener	2	0.22	1.82
Total	833	100.00	

The distribution of occupations points to a diverse middle class even at the upper end of its social scale. Those engaged in distribution and processing and craft manufacturing comprise one third of the owners of highly valued property. The frequency of occupational titles in both these categories is very close to what we might expect from their frequency in the Post Office Directory. However, the commercial middle class and the bankers are over-represented, dealers are under-represented but they still outstrip the professions (mainly accountants, dentists and architects) and are as numerically important among the wealthy as surgeons, physicians and doctors.

The decade 1810-1820 saw a burgeoning of the Edinburgh middle class. In the early 1820s Henry Cockburn was claiming Edinburgh to be a special case in the campaign for an extension of the franchise

because of its preponderance of citizens of wealth and respectability. [45] It was estimated that in 1822 there were 32,353 householders of property valued at 10 pounds (sterling) or above. [46] This represents 23.4% of the 1821 population figure. Of this number 8,087 were females or minors. Householders owning relatively modestly valued properties considerably outnumbered those with highly valued property. The following table summarises the distribution of property and householders at different ranges of property valuation. [47]

Numbers of Edinburgh Householders at Different Property Valuations, 1822

05-10	10-15	15-20	20-25	25-30	30-40	40-50
7626	5670	4314	3402	2762	2359	1697

50-60	60-70	70-80	80-90	>90	Total
1211	946	770	634	501	31892

The number of properties of rents of less than 5 pounds was estimated at 11,648. The above figures are exclusive of females and minors.

This increase of a varied middle class both in absolute terms and as a proportion of the population is an important context in which to set this thesis. The formation of voluntary associations provided opportunities for the middle class to exert power and develop class consciousness. Yet the middle class was also divided along lines of status, politics and religion. We shall explore ways in which these differences were both expressed and accommodated within the structure and ideology of various voluntary associations.

ENDNOTES

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7. Max Weber, The City, tr. and edited by Don Martindale and Gertrude Neuwirth, London, Heinemann, 1960. R.E. Pahl, 'Concepts in contexts: pursuing the urban of 'urban' sociology', in D. Fraser and A. Sutcliffe (eds.), The Pursuit of Urban History, London, Edward Arnold, 1983.

8. For example, Brian Elliot and David McCrone, The City : patterns of domination and conflict, London, Heinemann, 1982.

9. R.J. Morris, 'The middle class and British towns and cities of the industrial revolution, 1780-1870', in Fraser and Sutclife (eds.), op.cit.

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11. P. Abrams, 'Towns and economic growth : some theories and problems', in P. Abrams and E.A. Wrigley (eds.), Towns in Societies : Essays in Economic History and Historical Sociology, Cambridge, 1978.

12. David Harvey, Consciousness and the Urban Experience, Oxford, Basil Blackwell, 1985, pp. 1-35.

13. Hugo Arnot, History of Edinburgh, Edinburgh, 1779, p.332.

14. Ibid., p.337.

15. Ibid., p.338.

16. Robert Forsyth, The Beauties of Scotland, containing a clear and full account of the agriculture, commerce, mines and manufactures of the population, cities, towns, villages, etc. of each county, 5 vols., 1805-06, vol. 1, p.31.

17. Ibid., p.31.

18. A. J. Youngson, The Making of Classical Edinburgh, 1750-1840, Edinburgh, 1966, p.20.

19. Forsyth, op. cit., p.32.

20. Thomas Chalmers, The Christian and Civic Economy of Large Towns, Glasgow, 3 vols., 1821-26, vol. 1, p.27.

21. M. Flinn (ed.), Scottish Population History from the Seventeenth Century to the 1930s, Cambridge, 1977.

22. J. Stark, Picture of Edinburgh, 1806, p.461.

23. Ibid., pp.458-462.

24. P.J. Corfield with Serena Kelly, "'Giving directions to the town': the early town directories", Urban History Yearbook, 1984, pp.22-35; Gareth Shaw, "Directories as a source in urban history: a review of British and Canadian material", Urban History Yearbook, 1984, pp.36-44.

25. The idea of the physical expression of order in the built environment is explored in T. Markhus (ed.), Order in Space and Society, Edinburgh, Mainstream, 1982.

26. The estimates were derived by judging the average number of entries per page and multiplying by the number of pages. Given the impreciseness of criteria for inclusion in the Directory, this somewhat rough and ready method was considered to be valid.

27. R. J. Morris "Occupational coding : principles and examples", Historical Social Research, vol. 15, No. 1 (1990), pp.3-29.

28. The basis of those categories were those adopted by R. J. Morris, The Leeds Middle Class, 1830-1850, end of grant report to the SSRC/ESRC No. B/00/24/0003/1.

29. M. Berg, The Age of Manufactures : industry, innovation and work in Britain, 1700-1820, London, Fontana, 1985; D. Bremner, The Industries of Scotland : their rise progress and present condition, Edinburgh, 1869.

30. Although we are keen to avoid the unsystematic supplementing of occupational titles with other information, many of these cases, it is worth noting, were women. The occupations of their husbands or fathers may have been the true source of their income.

31. M. Weber, The City, op.cit., p.69.

32. It was recognised that many partnerships could still involve quite small amounts of capital, particularly in trades such as tailoring or jewellery where a son was merely being given a nominal stake in the business.

33. J. Stark, Picture of Edinburgh, 1819.

34. Rules of the Edinburgh Society of Journeymen Printers, 1819.

35. D. Bremner, op.cit., pp.352-3.

36. David Alexander, Retailing in England During the Industrial Revolution, London, 1970.

37. A.J. Youngson, op.cit.

38. J. Stark, Picture of Edinburgh, 1806, p.371.

39. Ian Donnachie, "Sources of capital and capitalisation in the Scottish brewing industry, C.1750-1830", Economic History Review, vol. xxx, no. 2, 1977, pp.269-285.

40. Excluding J. Reid and Co., for whom figures are incomplete.

41. B. Lenman, Integration, Enlightenment and Industrialisation : Scotland 1746-1832, London, Edward Arnold, 1981, pp.21-23.

42. W.A. Armstrong, "The use of information about occupation", in E.A. Wrigley (ed.), Nineteenth Century Society : essays in the use of quantitative methods for the study of social data, Cambridge University Press, 1972, pp.191-310.

43. This list is available in the archives of Edinburgh City Chambers. The relative value of the Scots pound was calculated from valuation books for the annuity and poor tax (also in the city archives) which gave figures in Scots money and sterling.

44. Forsyth, op.cit., p.32.

45. Henry Cockburn, Considerations submitted to the householders of Edinburgh, on the state of their representation in parliament, Edinburgh, 1823.

46. Ibid., p.35 (information taken from the Police Assessment Books).

47. Ibid., pp.15 and 35.

CHAPTER THREE

VOLUNTARY ASSOCIATIONS, 1780-1810

The essential aim of this chapter is contextualisation. In Chapter One we noted the general proposition, made by writers from a variety of disciplines, that it is possible to identify different types of voluntary associations which correspond with changing phases of societal development. Here we shall seek to elaborate a typology of voluntary associations in order to examine continuities and changes in their cultural form during a period of significant economic and social change.

In this chapter more precision will be given to the argument in Chapters One and Two that the study of voluntary associations helps us to understand social change. The form and content of voluntary associations are shaped by and help to shape the wider social structure. Concomitant with the socio-economic changes of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, voluntary associations underwent a cultural transition. The general thrust of my argument is that the typical characteristics of the form of voluntary associations changed in this period from small, ephemeral exclusivist, introverted clubs to more broadly-based Societies which explicitly appealed to the "public", asserted that authority for their public roles rested on public approbation, and claimed to speak and act on behalf of the "public".

Our main focus in this chapter will be on societies founded between 1780 and 1810. After 1780 a number of long-run economic and demographic changes in Scottish Society began to intensify. There was an acceleration of the rate of population increase and an exceptionally high speed of urban growth. [1] These changes put pressure on food supplies and caused sharp rises in grain prices. Evidence suggest that the real incomes of many Scottish workers

improved in the period up to 1792-3, but thereafter standards of living generally deteriorated up to the end of the Napoleonic Wars. [2] At the same time there was a maturation of capitalist principles of production resulting in new work methods and conditions of work. [3] Concomitant with this was the developing ideological framework of political economy. This embraced many strands, but with its central concern with the production of wealth, it undermined the mid-18th century consensus that the elite had a paternalistic moral obligation to supervise the welfare of the poor in return for their consent to be governed.

Such changes severly dislocated social relationships. In the large urban centres they created a crisis of control. The discontent of large numbers of urban workers, suffering poverty and displacement, unable to gain an assurance of basic subsistence from their rulers, provided a potential (and, at times, real) challenge to authority. It will be suggested that the specific ways in which voluntary associations developed in the period after 1780 were, in part, a response to this crisis.

In this chapter we wish to locate voluntary associations of the 1780-1810 period in a continuum of shifting cultural form. We shall briefly sketch the types of society which were characteristic of most of the 18th century. We shall seek to compare and contrast aspects of this typology with the cultural form which began to emerge in the late 18th century, and trace the development of that form towards the early 19th century. In so doing, we shall clarify the 1780-1810 period as one of cultural transition.

Early and Mid-18th Century Types of Voluntary Associations

In the 18th century most voluntary associations had certain

salient characteristics. They tended to be elitist, small in membership and relied on a few influential or charismatic individuals for their persistence. They displayed a low degree of institutionalisation. Such factors often made them ephemeral. Most were introverted in the sense that they had little desire to proselytise their aims or extend public participation in their affairs. However, a few societies aspired to a role of national leadership by diffusing ideas on 'improvement' largely through the publication of essays. The Honourable Society of Improvers and the Edinburgh Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Sciences, Manufacture and Agriculture in Scotland are examples of this type.

The most common type of voluntary association in the mid-18th century was the social or literary club. [4] In some of these, men engaged in debate, read essays and exchanged ideas. In Edinburgh we may note the Philosophical Society (founded in 1739 and became the Royal Society of Edinburgh in 1783), the Medical Society (1734) the Harveian Society (1773), the Literary Society (1777) and the Speculative Society (1764). As one 19th century commentator on such societies noted, their use was to provide "companionship with men of similar tastes and habits ... with many who regard as important, the facts and authorities in literature and science". [5]

Not all clubs were for the serious-minded literati. The Wig Club (1775), whose members included the Earl of Moray and the Earl of Haddington, is typical of the sort which were a forum for general revelry. [6] Sports societies also appear in the 18th century. The Edinburgh Burgess Golfing Society (1735) and the Bruntsfield Links Golf Club (1761) attracted the elite and the Edinburgh Skating Club (1778) was dominated by landed gentry and lawyers. [7]

Typically, such societies adopted exclusionary practices to limit membership. These practices were formalised and legitimised in a set of rules. Often an upper limit was set on the size of membership. New members were usually required to be recommended by current members, and their entry was commonly decided by a secret ballot of the members. In contrast to the 'subscriber democracies' of the 19th century, personal approbation was the crucial criterion for membership of a society. This served to maintain the cohesion of the group.

In her discussion of the elite's social season, Davidoff argues that "rules of selectivity" handled problems of social definition for the elite in a relatively socially mobile society. Members had their claims to status honour affirmed by their ability to fulfil the criteria for membership. Club rules functioned as regulators of access to status. [8]

Party politics and religious issues were not often the basis of interest for 18th century clubs. Indeed many clubs maintained cohesion by specifically excluding discussion of controversial topics. The Edinburgh Literary Society, for example, stated in its laws that "No religious debates be permitted in the Society". [9]

Many societies in Edinburgh up to 1780 were not predominantly urban-based either in the composition of their membership or in the focus of their concerns. This is a marked contrast to 19th century voluntary societies. Typically, 18th century clubs classified their membership according to resident (i.e. in town) and non-resident members, encouraging those living out of town to join by placing on them less onerous obligations of participation. The membership of 18th century societies reflected the long-distance social networks of

the elite. General meetings of the societies were held in Edinburgh, but were most commonly held in January to coincide with the social season of balls and parties. [10] The Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge, the Highland Society, the Skating Club, the Public Dispensary, the Wagering Club and the Harmonic Society all met for their A.G.M. in January.

Societies had a low degree of institutionalisation. By this it is meant that they did not display a pattern of social practices that were highly regular and continuous. [11] Most had no standing in legal terms to aquire, own and transfer property and regulate their proceedings. The seal of cause or charter, granted by the town council, recognised a society as a permanent corporate body and was to be more common in the early 19th century. Meeting venues were typically places of public resort such as hotels and taverns, rather than places, such as schoolrooms, dispensaries or churches, which defined the nature of the society and had been adapted to its roles.

Nor were 18th century voluntary societies part of the institutional fabric of public affairs. In Societies which did make claims to address issues of public interest, their practices were not widely recognised as social norms. In this context, we shall see that as societies in the late 18th century began to address issues of social concern, they were faced with the difficulty of having to assert their legitimacy.

This was particularly the case in the regulation of the allocation of resources to the poor. In the 18th century, charitable foundations played a relatively minor part in providing for the poor. The parish was the crucial institutional level of organisation for poor relief. The consent of heritors was required in raising legal

assessment for poor relief in the shire. In the city of Edinburgh the town council authorised assessment and Church collections. Kirk sessions maintained a crucial influence in the collection and distribution of relief and had a key supervisory role in investigating the circumstances of poor relief applications. In practice much poor relief revenue was raised on a voluntary basis, relying on the patronage of elite individuals. [12] Such charitable institutions as did exist were either tightly controlled by the town council, such as the Charity Workhouse (1743) and the Infirmary (1729), or had long-established regulations influenced by a legator and legally named trustees such as Heriot's Hospital for Boys (1659) and Watson's Hospital for Boys (1741). [13]

By the 1780s the poor relief system was showing signs of strain. The parochial basis of the system meant it was slow to respond to urban expansion. [14] The face-to-face relationship of the patron and the claimant was less typical. Moreover, falling church attendance by the elite meant that church collections were falling short of demand. John McFarlan noted in 1782 that the opulent seldom attended places of public worship, and the burdens of collective provision fell unevenly on "the middle ranks of citizens who attend the established church". [15]

Voluntary associations played a part in cementing this fracture in social relationships. Gradually they began to formalise a set of practices through which they created a legitimate role for themselves in the provision of poor relief, medical aid, religious and secular education, cultural institutions and policing. These practices by the 19th century typically involved an appeal to public opinion through a publication of the objects of the society, a public

meeting, the appointment of a committee, the framing of a set of rules which detailed the eligibility of members and the proper objects of the society, the affiliation of members by payment of subscription and the publication and circulation of subscription lists and the annual statement of accounts. In the early 19th century such activities became well-defined, widely-recognised patterns of social behaviour by increasingly larger sections of the community than had been responsible for civic action in the 18th century.

The move towards this type of institutionalised public voluntary association, characteristically formed and supported by the urban middle class, was, however, a gradual one. Its evolution during the period 1780-1810 will now be described and analysed. The period is a useful focus of attention because it is possible to observe continuities from older forms of voluntary associations (such as we have described above), as well as changes in form and content as societies respond to social crises and begin to assert their legitimacy.

Voluntary Associations, 1780-1810

The following list gives the names of voluntary associations founded in Edinburgh between 1780-1810, together with a brief description of their activities. It has been compiled through surveys of newspapers and primary printed literature such as annual reports and appeals to the public.

YEAR	NAME	ACTIVITY
1784	Harmonical Society	Cultivation of vocal harmony, especially sacred music
1784	Highland Society	Encouragement of improvement schemes in the Highlands; awards premiums for essays

YEAR	NAME	ACTIVITY
1785	Congress Hall Social Club	Social club
1785	Society for Relief of Destitute Sick	Give seasonal poor relief
1786	Society for Promoting Religious Knowledge	Distribution of bibles, provision of religious instruction
1787	Dialectic Society	Debating club
1787	New Club	Dining, playing billiards, cards, etc.
1787	Journeymen Bakers Society	Organises insurance fund for sickness and funeral expenses
1788	Humane Society	Rehabilitation of those rescued at sea
1790	Society for Effecting Abolition of African Slave Trade	Petitioning parliament
1790	Signet Club	Dining
1792	Lunatic Asylum	Provision and regulation of special institution for the insane
1792	Asylum for Relief of Indigent and Industrious Blind	Provision and regulation of special institution for the blind
1792	Society for the Benefit of Sons of the Clergy	Raising subscription to aid Church of Scotland Clergy
1792	Associated Friends of the People	Campaign for parliamentary reform
1792	Edinburgh Association for the Support of the Constitution	Anti-radical campaign
1794	Subscription Library	Provision of a library
1795	Duddingston Curling Society	Play Curling
1795	Religious Tract Society	Publishing and distribution of tracts
1796	Missionary Society	Raises funds to send missionaries abroad

YEAR	NAME	ACTIVITY
1797	Gratis Sabbath School Society	Institutes non-denominational Sunday schools
1797	Friendly Society of Dissenting Ministers	Insurance scheme
1797	Magdalene Asylum	Provision and regulation of institution for the physical and spiritual care of prostitutes
1798	Canongate Friendly Society	Insurance provision
1798	Society for Propagating the Gospel at Home	Institution of (dissenting) Sunday schools
1800	Select Subscription Library	Provision of a library
1802	Literary Society	Debating and presenting essays
1802	Didactic Society	Debating and presenting essays
1803	Friday Club	Dining
1806	Beneficient Society	Provision of poor relief
1809	Bible Society	Provision of money to national bible societies
1809	Caledonian Horticultural Society	Promotion of improvement in gardening; publishing essays
1810	Deaf and Dumb Institution	Regulation of institution giving work to deaf and dumb
1810	Church Music Society	Public recitals of church music
1810	Society for Support of Gaelic Schools	Institution of schools in Highlands
1810	Lancastrian School Society	Provision of secular, non-parochial school
1810	Edinburgh Institute	Provision of 'popular' lectures on science and literature

This list of thirty-seven voluntary associations founded between 1780 and 1810 details a wide variety of activities. These include literary and social clubs, societies providing relief for the unemployed, sick and infirm, new medical institutions, a variety of forms of religious proselytising and the institution of schools.

In chronological terms, there is a dearth of activity in the first years of the 1780s. The mid 1780s are notable for specific responses to urban poverty and high grain prices. We shall examine these in some detail. 1792 is an important year for voluntary association formation with divisive political associations as well as appeals to the whole community for the care of the blind and insane. In the late 1790s there was a spate of religious activity, influenced primarily by evangelicals and dissenters. In the 1800s there is relatively little activity, the majority of foundations being of the literary/social type. 1810 marks the beginning of increased frequency of foundation. Between 1810 and 1819 we can identify thirty new societies.

We have identified the period 1780 to 1810 as one of transition from a predominance of one type of voluntary association to another. In accordance with this argument, an overview of the voluntary associations of the period reveals a mixture of old and new types. Elitist, exclusive clubs appear at the same time as campaigning societies open to all subscribers. However, as we look closely at the cultural form of even some new types of societies we shall see signs of deference to older sources of authority such as the landed elite, the established church and the town council. Indeed, in many institutions, this deference persisted well into the nineteenth century. Also, at the level of individual societies, we shall see

that many have stagnant levels of support until they become more fully institutionalised in the early 19th century.

It will not be necessary to describe the practices of every society on our list. Rather, our method shall be to identify broad characteristics of voluntary association types and examine particular societies which are representative and illustrative of those characteristics.

The Dialectic Society (1787) was typical of the exclusive association which restricted membership to individuals who conformed to a set of social characteristics which were defined in advance by the existing membership. Mutual agreement on what the characteristics should be provided group cohesion. The exclusionary practices of this type of society were given legitimacy by being formalised in a published set of regulations.

It was stipulated that members had to have attended university for at least a year. [16] Petitions to become members had to be signed by four current members. Passing this test of social approbation was more important than paying the relatively modest five shillings entry fee. This contrasts with the 'subscriber democracies' common in the 19th century in which payment of a minimum subscription was enough in itself to guarantee membership.

Personal approbation of the membership by the membership tended to lead to a homogeneity of religious or political views, even if these were not stated in the rules of the society. In the Friday Club (1803), for example, Lord Cockburn described the main criterion for members as being considered by the existing members to have "perfect safety". Although "party spirit" was said to be avoided, the "general creed" of the club was Whiggism. [17]

Status divisions within a literary or social club tended to be dependent upon loyalty to the group and participation in its affairs. In the Dialectic Society, for example, a category of Honorary Member was defined in the rules for those attending meetings for at least three years, reading at least four essays and opening three questions for debate. Conversely, sanctions were taken against members who breached loyalty to the group or transgressed its codes of conduct. Fines were levied for absence, 'neglect of duty' (such as failing to read an essay) or 'delinquency' (such as interrupting a speaker). Members were to be expelled if they missed three successive meetings. Typically, members could not 'import' status based on their position in Society at large to gain prestige or influence in the club. At any rate, status divisions were typically narrowed by the filter of entry regulations and procedures.

The dependency on an exclusive group of individuals tended to give societies of this type an ephemeral character. When the Signet Club was founded as a social club limited to twenty members in 1790 by a small group of young lawyers, there had already been two other Signet Clubs in 1786 and 1788. Signet Clubs were also formed in 1808 and 1826. [18] The Edinburgh Literary Society was formed in 1777, but the publication of its laws in 1789 is the last record we have of it. [19] In 1802, however, the Literary Society of Edinburgh was founded along very similar lines to its predecessor. [20]

Many of the literary/social societies of the period appeared unconcerned with proselytising, expanding their membership, or advertising their activities to a wider public. Their orientation was toward the mutual benefit of their confined group. The form which libraries took in the 18th century illustrates this

introvertedness.

The Edinburgh Subscription Library was granted a seal of cause and charter of erection by the town council in 1794. Thus, the rules and objects of the society were given official approval in the politically sensitive years following the French Revolution when the spread of printing and literacy enabled the dissemination of radical ideas. Those rules limited the number of subcribers to the library to seventy-five. [21]

By the end of our period there were attempts to open up this previously exclusive society. In 1811, a special general meeting raised the number of available tickets to four hundred at a cost of twelve guineas for new members. [22] In January 1812 a motion was carried raising the limit to six hundred members. Two months later, Charles Stewart successfully overturned the decision, noting "the many inconveniences experienced from the extraordinary influx of new members". Thus, attempts to widen participation in exclusive societies were highly contentious.

However, as the history of another library shows, the desire to remain select could be compromised by the need to remain solvent. Moreover, by the 1810s there is a new emphasis on establishing a permanent institution guaranteed by the support of the public. The Select Subscription Library was initiated in 1800 by a small group of ten individuals, some of whom were personally responsible for the first collection of books. [23] They met in the printing office of Thomas McLeish and their occupations included a tinsmith, a merchant, a lecturer, and an umbrella maker. They resolved to "procure for their mutual use a collection of books, rather select than numerous, and chiefly such as are above the purchase of individuals". In the

first year the relatively low entry fee of five shillings had attracted forty-eight members. It was thought necessary to raise the fee to half a guinea in order to maintain exclusiveness. Far from detering applications, the higher fee appeared to attract a more respectable membership. The membership had doubled by 1803. The response was to once more raise the entry fee, setting it at one guinea. At this higher rate, the membership steadily decreased up to 1809.

At this time there was a new emphasis on permanency and the need to attract new members. It was proposed to acquire new premises in a central location. The society had previously used a hired hall for storing its books. It was agreed that "the acquisition would confer such a degree of respectability on the Institution that a large accession of members might be reckoned on". Gaining public respectability rather than the private approbation of an exclusive group had now become a key element of the form of the voluntary association.

About one third of the societies founded between 1780 and 1810 were of the literary/social type which were predominantly concerned with the mutual enjoyment of an exclusive membership. We can classify the Harmonical Society, the Congress Hall Social Club, the Dialectic Society, the New Club, the Signet Club, the Subscription Library, the Duddingston Curling Society, the Select Subscription Library, the Literary Society, the Didactic Society, the Friday Club and the Church Music Society as being of this type. Their activities were circumscribed in the sense that they did not seek influence or power in the wider community.

However, during the same period certain types of society did

engage in activities which directly claimed a legitimate role in the allocation of resources and power in urban Society. Such claims often, explicitly or implicitly, challenged established institutions such as the church and town council. It was necessary for such groups to attract public support beyond a small coterie in order to legitimate their actions.

The issue of relieving urban poverty was one in which the ambiguous legitimacy of voluntary associations can be demonstrated. It is to this type of society that we now turn.

It was argued earlier in this chapter that the relief of poverty and its implications for the ordering of social relationships were creating critical problems for the ruling class in the late 18th century. Voluntary association formation was one response to this crisis.

We shall begin by looking at an institution which predates our main period of study but which usefully illustrates some of the themes we shall wish to explore. This society is also relevant because some of its practices served as a model for an important poor relief society of the 1780s.

In 1773 several of the "nobility, gentry, ministers and others" opened a subscription to give subsistence to the "honest and industrious poor". [24] They recognised that many people were often deprived of basic subsistence "by the severity of the weather, bodily sickness or other unavoidable misfortunes". Many people had no share of the existing public charity. Within days £150 was subscribed. A meeting of subscribers was held and they formed themselves into the Society for the Relief of the Honest and Industrious Poor in and about the City of Edinburgh. They proceeded to elect a president,

treasurer and committee of fifteen. The committee met weekly from February to May to issue supplies of meal and money "to such persons whose indigent circumstances were properly attested". In May a further public meeting of subscribers was held and it was resolved to discontinue aid except to persons "in very peculiar circumstances of distress". In December an appeal was circulated to the public requesting the renewal of subcriptions.

This brief description illustrates a number of broad themes. Firstly, the impetus for the society came from traditional sources of authority - landowners and the established church. The president was the Earl of Leven who held the post of His Majesty's High Commissioner to the Church of Scotland.

Secondly, the general meeting of subscribers is used to achieve consensus on the objects of the society. In defining the types of person who will be entitled to relief they express moral values about the nature of poverty. The second address to the public in 1774 is particularly insistent that the persons relieved are "the honest and industrious, not the idle and vagrant poor ... not those who from habits of slothfulness and vice, will not work, but are a perpetual burden and nuisance to the community". [25] This problem of identifying and classifying the 'honest' and 'deserving' indigent poor and 'deceitful', 'lazy' beggars was to be common as urban populations increased. By giving relief to one category and withdrawing it from the other the underlying aim was to give "encouragement to industry". [26]

Thirdly, the members of the committee were essentially performing the supervisory function traditionally undertaken by Kirk sessions in investigating poor relief claims. Applicants were

required to have subscribers of the society attest that they were proper objects of the charity. In the expanding urban community, it was recognised that subscribers may not have personal knowledge of the applicant. In such cases they were required to confirm the attestation of two others. Thus, great influence was accorded to those whose judgement of the poor was considered respectable. By the second year of the society's operations applicants were required to have a certificate stating employment, age, length of residence in a parish, number of children, the cause of not being able to support themselves and a statement disclaiming receiving other public money.

Fourthly, the spatial terms of reference of the society were defined as being "in and about the City of Edinburgh". [27] The scope of operations, going beyond the parish or the formal administrative boundaries, reflected the need for a more flexible response to the problem of urbam poverty. The society did require applicants to state their length of residence in a parish, mainly to check that they were not receiving any other form of relief. However, the committee took responsibility for supervising all applications irrespective of parochial boundaries. The society also considered applicants from outwith the formal boundaries of the City of Edinburgh. The artificiality of the ancient legal distinctions between the City of Edinburgh and its burghs and suburbs was highlighted by the problem of urban poverty in the late 18th century. In January 1783, for example, the Edinburgh Advertiser published a plea by a correspondent to consider the poor of the suburbs who had no right to purchase meal at a reduced price in the town, and a few days later reported that magistrates in the Canongate had opened a subscription since people in the burgh had no claim to the recent

collection for the industrious poor in the city. [28]

Fifthly, the organisation of the society reflects the ambiguous legitimacy which formally constituted voluntary associations had in the late 18th century when intervening on matters traditionally under the control of kirk sessions or magistrates. Whereas later societies would expect a regular annual income from an expanding number of subscribers, the Society for the Relief of the Honest and Industrious Poor appealed to the public on an *ad hoc* basis, responding to the vagaries of seasonal unemployment and fluctuations in grain prices. Appeals went out when the funds of the previous year were nearly exhausted. Appeals were particularly directed to those who had contributed in the past, rather than attempts being made to widen participation in the venture.

By 1785 the Society was having difficulty coping with the scale of the problem of unemployment and poverty. It entreated contributors to recommend only outworkmen, "masons, slaters, wrights, barrowmen and others deprived of work by the inclemency of the weather, or other temporary cause". [29] In the same year the Society for the Relief of the Destitute Sick (SRDS) was formed. It shared many of the same features as the Society for the Relief of the Honest and Industrious Poor, but also usefully demonstrates some of the new developments in voluntary associations of our period.

It is important to set the foundations of the SRDS in context in order to substantiate our argument that voluntary associations were responsive to wider social conditions. Grain prices rose significantly in the 1780s. There was a particularly sharp rise in 1782 and prices remained high in the following years. [30] The authorities were sensitive to the problem and took such measures as

raising public subcriptions, importing grain from abroad and selling it at subsidised prices. [31]

Although such measures were successful in minimising disorder, the potential of the Edinburgh crowd for threatening authority was realised in 1784, when there was an organised and synchronised attack on two distilleries in Edinburgh and Dalkeith. We shall examine this riot and the responses to it at length because of what it reveals about relations between the governors and the governed. In turn, this will provide the background against which we may see voluntary associations as part of the complexity of response to urban crises by the authorities.

A distillery had recently been erected at Canonmills on the outskirts of Edinburgh. There existed a popular belief that the large quantities of grain distilled there were causing high prices. A large crowd attacked the distillery, but were thwarted by a company of dragoons who had been stationed at Leith in anticipation of the assult. [32] Armed workers from within the distillery fired on the crowd and one man was killed. Three nights later an even larger crowd, undeterred by the fatality, assembled by beat of drum and proceeded again to Canonmills. They were again repelled by military force, several rioters being wounded. On the same night a crowd burnt a distillery at Ford on the outskirts of Edinburgh, causing damages later estimated at £7,000.

Thus, in June 1784 property owners in Edinburgh were taking delivery of arms and ammunition, and troops were being deployed in a constant state of readiness. [33] In July of the following year the Society for the Relief of the Destitute Sick was established "to give seasonal relief to those who are laid aside by sudden distress, and

thereby prevented from following the occupations by which they provide for themselves and their families". [34] These are two different responses to the problems of economic distress and social control. Their connectedness may be clarified by a closer examination of the range of the authorities' responses to the distillery riots.

Four aspects of their behaviour seem particularly important. Firstly, the authorities appeared to have some sympathy with the populace's suspicion of Haig's distillery, which was an unfamiliarly large unit of production in the community and employed work processes that were mysterious to many. Strenuous efforts were made to persuade people of the falsehood of rumours that suggested the distillers were using all kinds of grain and even vegetables. Public notices were posted containing sworn statements by the company that the barley they used was largely imported and the only wheat they used was unfit for bread. A special committee of the heritors of Midlothian was set up "to concert the most effectual measures for undeceiving the deluded people". [35] Thus, the authorities attached importance to giving paternal reassurances in the face of modern industrial practices.

Secondly, paternalistic care of the poor was recognised as an important means of maintaining order. The unspoken contract by which the wealthy cared for the welfare of the poor in return for their consent to be governed appeared to be breaking down. [36] Two weeks after the riots the Edinburgh Advertiser noted the contributions of over 2,000 guineas to the charity workhouse and warned,

> "The above transfer, together with the liberal contribution made some months ago to supply the poor with grain, shows the generosity of the public to the poor, and should be remembered with gratitude by them, as a strong motive to

> restrain the spirit of discontent and turbulence which has lately disgraced this part of the country; and as all damages must be paid by the public, they may exhaust those funds which might be generously applied for the relief of the poor in cases of future necessity." [37]

The third aspect of the response to the riots which is of relevance is the need felt to mobilise the support of wide sections of the community. It was said at the time of the riots that the fears of the populace were being fuelled and manipulated by 'self-interested' men "whose characters and situations in society would render it disgraceful for them to appear openly". [38] To some extent this assertion may have been political propaganda, but it does at least hint that public attitudes to the rioters were divergent. The sworn statements by Haigs were published in leading Edinburgh newspapers and were aimed as much at middle class opinion as at the 'deluded' populace. All men of property were encouraged to take action against further rioting since they would have to bear the cost. The incorporated trades met and resolved to keep tighter supervision on their journeymen and apprentices. [39] According to a decision of the Midlothian heritors, employers were instructed to dismiss any apprentice found to be involved in mobbing, and such persons would be prevented from getting employment in the shire for twelve months. [40] Similarly, the Company of Merchants resolved to use their influence to prevent employees from aiding and abetting the disorders. [41]

Fourthly, employers and property owners demonstrated an ability to organise themselves very rapidly in response to a perceived threat. We have mentioned above their ability to use economic power to give or withdraw money and employment. There was also physical mobilisation. The meeting of the Midlothian heritors planned to

"associate themselves into certain districts and bodies" who would keep armed watch over potential trouble spots. [42] The County Meeting advised the Edinburgh Magistrates to substitute the military guard with civil officers. Heritors in each parish were to appoint constables "from amongst the most respectable persons of the middling ranks of the people". [43]

The distillery riots of 1784 and the responses to them provide a useful case study which reveals the wider problems of negotiating social relationships in a modernising commercial society. Two general conclusions can be drawn. Firstly, the response of the bourgeoisie was to organise a wide cross-section of property owners and employers, using main force and economic power to defend their mutual interest. The consciousness of this mutuality of interest raised by such actions could be the basis for other forms of organisation such as voluntary associations.

Secondly, the issue provoked the reassertion of the traditional elite role as patrons and guardians, together with the reciprocal duties of the governed. Yet, as has been explained, demographic and economic changes made it hard to maintain paternal relationships. Voluntary associations may be understood as one response to this crisis of control. They undoubtedly were capable of emphasising traditional duties and values, yet also promoted a modern outlook by producing ways of seeing new social conditions and providing institutional mechanisms for developing new social relationships and practices such as, for example, social surveys, regularised subscriptions and public meetings to sanction poor relief policy. [44]

It is within this interpretative framework that the analysis of

the Society for the Relief of the Destitute Sick is set. We shall briefly describe the origins and objectives of the society. In 1785 several persons, influenced by a London Society for the Relief and Spiritual Instruction of the Destitute Sick, formed a similar society in Edinburgh after several meetings for "prayer and consultation", encouraged by the "approbation and concurrence" of many others. [45] They at first met in Lady Glenorchy's charity school before being given the use of the Society in Scotland for the Propagation of Christian Knowledge's premises in Warriston's Close (the same premises used by the Society for the Relief of the Industrious Poor). The main object of the society was stated as being "to give seasonable relief to those who are laid aside by sudden distress, and thereby prevented from following the occupations by which they provide for themselves and their families; who have no friends disposed and able to receive them and have no acknowledged claim on any charitable institution". [46] The society, according to its rules, was to consist of persons "friendly to religion". [47] The admission fee was a mere 6d. and the minimum quarterly contribution was one shilling (i.e. a penny a week). Members recommended those who were to receive relief. Applicants for relief were visited by members of a twelve man committee and their circumstances were investigated. The society precisely defined the sphere of its activities - "the operations of the society are to be confined to the city and suburbs within the Toll bars, and places at equal distance". [48]

This type of society has continuities with older institutions and values, yet also displays features adaptive to the pressures described above.

On the one hand, the SRDS clearly relied on the approval and patronage of traditional sources of authority. Their formative meetings received "approbation and concurrence". The recommendation of the society by the established church was considered important to advertise. In 1802, a list of 36 ministers who had visited and recommended the society was published. [49] The provision of accommodation in a school supported by Lady Glenorchy, a prominent sympathiser of the evangelicals in the Church of Scotland, and the use of the SSPCK's hall were further indications of respectability, brought to the attention of potential members. The Society modelled its committee system for the investigation of the poor and allocation of resources on the already existing society for the Relief of Industrious Poor (and also had two of the same banking firms for receiving contributions).

The views of elite members were crucial in determining the policies of the society. Although the society could attract a wide social base because of its low membership fee, the appeal to the public in 1788 states explicitly, "... to the recommendations of contributors in superior stations they think themselves bound to pay attention". [50] Elite control of the society was institutionalised to the extent that the rules entitled the committee, which conducted all the business of the society including the appointment of visitors from among themselves, to nominate its succeeding members. The nominations did require the ratification of the quarterly general meeting, but were unlikely to be challenged.

On the other hand, certain aspects of the society contrast with typical features of societies prior to 1780. Social closure in the society was much less marked. Entry was not dependent on status -

everyone who could afford 6d. could join. Such people were described as members and were regarded as constituent parts of the society. They could formulate rules and approve committee members at general meetings. Just as there had been a broad-based response to the rioters, here there was an implication that the whole community had a responsibility to care for the poor.

Wider public participation can be seen as a response to the difficulties of poverty and control. The society repeated the need to identify deceitful beggars and the truly indigent. "To distinguish one from the other class", stated the appeal to the public, "is often difficult, and in many cases, without a laborious investigation, impossible". [51] They argued that those in superior stations could not be expected to visit the poor. Those engaged "in the hurry of business" cannot afford the time. Many of the wealthy have to delegate decisions about charity to servants, whose fidelity and discretion could not always be relied upon. Thus, the weekly investigations of the poor by committee members provided a response to the social gap between rich and poor. Committee members acted on behalf of the wealthy to ensure their contributions were bestowed with discretion.

Committee members also performed functions previously the reserve of church elders. Each committee member was given responsibility for visiting a particular district, rather similar to the division of parochial boundaries. District visitors were encouraged "to embrace any proper opportunity of speaking to them (the poor) about spiritual and eternal things; and shall pray with them if desired". [52] This reflected the persistence of the view that moral improvement was crucial to the relief of poverty.

However, the performance of a spiritual function by laymen was of doubtful legitimacy. The sensitivity of the issue may be inferred from the exclusion of 'Spiritual Instruction' from the Society's title, which had been one of the roles of the similar society in London.

Despite this adaptation to new social conditions, throughout the period under discussion there are no publications of annual reports of general meetings or lists of subscribers. The lack of regularity is also reflected in the yearly expenditure of the society. Members tended to make year to year decisions about contributions in response to specific economic conditions, rather than pledge consistent annual support.

Expenditure of the Society for the Relief of the Destitute Sick, [53] 1786-1812

Year (Nov.-Nov.)	Expended	Families	Persons	Average per person
1786-1787	£105	230	590	43 pennies
1787-1788	207	413	1009	49 "
1788-1789	234	567	1132	50 "
1789-1790	260	590	1291	48 "
1790-1791	259	645	1276	49 "
1791-1792	234	467	957	59 "
1792-1793	258	490	1242	50 "
1793-1794	197	438	996	47 "
1794-1795	203	457	896	54 "
1795-1796	308	538	1264	58 "
1796-1797	299	498	1248	58 "
1797-1798	176	479	1195	35 "
1798-1799	283	629	1278	53 "
1799-1800	375	656	1881	48 "
1800-1801	320	710	1787	43 "
1801-1802	298	685	1720	42 "
1802-1803	288	644	1600	43 "
1803-1804	350	648	1569	54 "
1804-1805	347	405	1030	80 "
1805-1806	300	451	1051	69 "
1806-1807	367	524	1182	75 "
1807-1808	387	592	1437	65 "
1808-1809	385	668	1602	58 "
1809-1810	421	733	1707	59 "
1810-1811	467	755	1845	61 "
1811-1812	662	1034	2761	58 "

The table above shows that up to 1806 the total amount which the society is able to spend on relief fluctuates markedly. From 1806 onwards annual expenditure increases steadily. Fluctuations are particularly sharp in the mid to late 1790s. Variations in income affected the number of applicants given aid rather than the amount of aid given to each applicant. The average amount spent on individual applicants remains fairly constant, except in 1797-98 and 1804-1808. This reflects the attitude that relief for subsistence should be only an encouragement to industry, rather than a continuing source of income which the poor could come to rely on.

It is only after the end of our present period of study that the SRDS gained official recognition as a self-perpetuating corporate body. In 1813 the society inherited property from a deceased member. Accordingly, it appealed to the town council for a seal of cause which would give it quasi-legal status as a corporate body. The terms of incorporation entitled the society and its trustees to purchase and dispose of various kinds of fixed and moveable property, to borrow money, receive subscriptions and donations, take legal action in the courts, and to formulate and amend its laws by a majority of its general meeting. The rules and regulations were formalised in the seal of cause. The trustees were named as the president of the society, the vice-presidents (of whom there were six), the treasurer and the secretary. The funds were vested in them and securities for loans were to be in their name. [54]

This institutionalisation of the society was accompanied by the publication of annual reports from the mid 1810s. Such factors encouraged the growth of regular members. The following table demonstrates the expansion of the society in this later period. [55]

Year	Donations/Annual Subscriptions	Quarterly Subscriptions
1815-16	248	296
1816-17	370	300
1818-19	478	327

In our discussion of poor relief voluntary associations we have shown that, in the late 18th century, the formation of societies like the SRDS was part of a range of responses to deal with economic distress and the threat it posed to order. Such societies provided an institutional framework through which resources could be allocated to 'worthy' poor who were identified and supervised. Through the recommendation of applicants for relief and their monitoring by district visitors, wider sections of the urban middle class participated in activity traditionally the reserve of kirk sessions, magistrates and town councillors. This was a new and different type of social organisation to the literary/social club model which we described earlier in the chapter. Nevertheless, it was deferential to its elite patrons. Its lack of regular annual reports in our period reflects contemporary mistrust of institutionalising a permanent source of relief which the poor could come to rely on. Only in the 1810s does the publication of annual reports and subscription lists of regular and expanding numbers express the role of the society as a legitimate, publicly accountable institution, sanctioned by the local state, engaged in practices widely recognised as social norms.

The discussion of poor relief voluntary societies, and the particular focus on the SRDS, has allowed us to explore directly certain aspects of social relationships. However, at this point we need to return to our overview of the range of voluntary associations founded in the 1780-1810 period in order to further elaborate on

broader aspects of the cultural form of voluntary associations. We wish to point out certain common salient features of a variety of types of voluntary association, as well as examining differences between representative types of societies and tracing changes over time within certain societies.

The first broad theme which we wish to explore further is attitudes and behaviour towards traditional sources of status and power. Although certain societies competed for influence with established institutions, many originated from within the elite and appealed for public support on the basis of having the approbation of established sources of influence. An examination of the origins of the Edinburgh Lunatic Asylum will serve to illustrate this point.

The public care of lunatics in the 18th century in Edinburgh had been undertaken by the Royal Infirmary to the extent that it provided underground cells for their "proper restraint" and recovery. [56] Lunatics were also kept in a branch of the charity workhouse known as bedlam. The Infirmary had been established in the early 18th century according to plans agreed by the Royal Colleges of Surgeons and Physicians. It was regulated according to terms laid down in a Royal Charter and its managers were approved by the town council. The charity workhouse was also under the control of the town council. Proposals for a separate institution for the care and treatment of lunatics, therefore, challenged, at least implicitly, this oligarchy.

Thus, before publishing his proposals for a new asylum in 1792, Dr. Andrew Duncan laid his plans before the Royal College of Physicians and the Royal College of Surgeons, and was able to claim their approbation. Despite their backing little progress was made in raising money to build the new asylum. Only £161 was collected up to

the end of 1805, most of it from within the two medical colleges. [57]

Developments in 1806 and 1807 illustrate the importance of having official sanction for such a venture to gain public confidence. In 1806, the asylum received a grant of £2,000 from parliament, thanks to the influence of the Lord Advocate, Henry Erskine and Sir John Sinclair. In 1807 a Royal Charter was granted. This removed "some objections that had been raised as to the intended government of the institution". [58] The Charter ensured that contributions towards the building of the asylum would be controlled by official trustees who could act as faithful guardians of public subscriptions. The trustees named in the Charter included the Lord Provost, the Dean of Guild, the Convenor of Trades, the Lord President of the Court of Session, the Lord Chief Baron, the Lord Advocate, the Dean of the Faculty of Advocates, the Principal of Edinburgh University and the presidents of the Royal Colleges of Surgeons and Physicians. Every medical practitioner in the Asylum was subject to regulations which the trustees saw fit to lay down. [59]

A further address to the public was published in 1807 which sought to capitalise on the legitimacy accorded to the institution by the Royal Warrant. It argued that the Warrant constituted a respectable body of managers into a corporation. It advertised that the undertaking was encouraged by the Lord Provost and magistrates and "many distinguished characters have taken a zealous interest in its success". [60] The Royal Warrant detailed who were to be Extraordinary Managers of the institution, thus ensuring "a continual succession of fit persons" for managing its affairs. [61]

The influence of the Royal Warrant had the hoped for effect of "conciliating approbation and patronage". [62] One hundred and fifty-two contributions were received in the year it was granted. No donation was less than a guinea and almost half were between two and five guineas. There were a few large donations - the Duke of Buccleuch, the City of Edinburgh and two private banking companies each gave £105, and there were two legacies of £100. Those few large donations accounted for about one third of the contributions for that year. [63] In a society of this type the support of the elite was vital in generating the large amount of capital required to complete the building of the asylum.

By contrast, other types of societies eschewed claims to high status approbation and instead, attempted a broad-based appeal. This was particularly true of religious voluntary associations. The majority of religious voluntary assocations formed in the 1780-1810 period were strongly influenced and supported by evangelicals of the Established Church and by dissenters.

Although the Church of Scotland placed rather less emphasis on the importance of pastoral instruction in interpreting the scriptures than its Anglican counterpart, it was able to claim a constitutional legitimacy in the monopolisation of disseminating religious knowledge. As will be explained more fully in Chapter Five, the experience of membership of voluntary associations for numerically marginal sects was the feeling of being in the mainstream of a broadly united Christian movement. The public voluntary association provided the basis for alternative sources of status and influence in religious affairs.

For example, in 1797 the Edinburgh Gratis Sabbath School Society

(EGSSS) was formed by "a number of pious persons of various denominations" whose object was "to promote the Religious instruction of youth, by erecting, supporting and conducting Sabbath Evening Schools in Edinburgh and its neighbourhood". [64] The criterion for membership was very loose. Rule number one of the society stated, "This society shall be composed of Christians of every denomination, who are of one mind respecting the leading doctrines of Christianity." [65]

The legitimacy for extending the activities of such institutions lay in 'public support' rather than elite approbation. By the end of our period this was being more confidently stated. For example, when the Lancastrian School Society proposed to build a new school for boys and girls at their general meeting in May 1812, they claimed "the countenance and support of the public". [66] The activities of such a society were guided not by the views of elite patrons; nor by deference to vested interests but by the interests of the "community". The Directors sought to "extend their operations, as the circumstances of the community may allow". [67] In similar language, Bishop Sandford told his congregated audience in March 1813 that it had been determined "to extend the benefits of the institution as far as the circumstances of the community may require". [68]

We shall explore the significance of terms of reference such as 'the public' and 'community' in later chapters. For the present we may note that whereas some societies attached importance to the sanction of traditional sources of status and power, others sought to define their legitimacy on different terms.

The second general theme to be explored more fully is the

underdeveloped institutionalisation of most early voluntary associations. The history of the Edinburgh Gratis Sabbath School Society provides one illustration of this point. The society opened its first school in March 1797 in Portsburgh, within a year thirty-four schools were in operation. However, up to 1812, the number of schools which the society ran at any one time varied considerably, averaging around forty. [69]

The reason for the stagnation appears similar to that which we observed in poor relief societies. The society did not constitute itself on a regular basis and did not seek to attract a constant income from regular subscribers. There is an absence of annual reports or lists of subscribers to the society until the 1810s. Up to 1812, the society had consciously "laid up no fund", but had "trusted to the liberality of their Christian brethren to supply their wants from time to time", and had applied money to immediate use. [70] From 1797 to 1812 this piecemeal way of generating income had persistently put the society in debt. By the end of our period, therefore, the society was under financial pressure to extend its operations and attract the commitment of persistent annual subscribers.

To some extent, the unwillingness to produce formal accounts of the activities of the society on a regular basis reflected its ambiguous legitimacy. The evangelical and dissenting influence on Sunday School, tract distribution and missionary societies tainted them with the suspicion of radicalism or even subversion. James Haldane's Society for the Propagation of the Gospel at Home was condemned by the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland in 1797. At the same time the General Assembly attempted to assert control

over sabbath schools by requesting presbyteries to register all sabbath and day-schools within their bounds. [71]

However, underdeveloped institutionalisation is a general feature of most voluntary societies of the period, not only of those associated with religious or political extremism. The Blind Asylum opened in September 1793 but did not ask supporters to become annual subscribers until 1795. [72] It is only in the 1810s that the Lunatic Asylum begins to publish regular annual reports as opposed to sporadic public appeals. Annual meetings of contributors to the asylum were held, whereas the emphasis had previously been on meetings of the trustees. A set of regulations was laid before the general meeting for approval. The institutional structure of the general meeting provided a forum in which different opinions could be contested. The regulations had to be resubmitted in 1814 having not found agreement in 1813. [73] The institutional framework though which support for the Lunatic Asylum could be channelled became more elaborate at this time. Various committees were appointed to publicise the society and solicit funds from sections of the community who were identified as important constituencies of support: the nobility, the College of Justice, parishes and congregations (Established and Dissenters), the Merchant Company, "opulent citizens and inhabitants", the incorporated trades, medical practitioners and (specifically) the Societies of Friends (Quakers) who were closely associated with the reform of the treatment of lunatics. [74]

The third general characteristic of middle class voluntary societies founded in the 1780-1810 period is that they were, mostly, urban-based in terms of their participants, organisational structures and sphere of activities. National movements disseminated their

ideas through personal contacts, published reports and newspaper and periodical articles, but organisation tended to be at the level of the individual town. Thus, architectural and medical experts compared the running of similar lunatic ayslums before planning the one at Edinburgh. [75] The planners of the Blind Asylum were influenced by the one recently instituted at Liverpool. [76] The influence of London is common. The Edinburgh Institute, founded in 1810 to give popular lectures in science and literature, adopted resolutions which aimed at assimilating the form and principles of the society to similar institutions in London. [77] The Edinburgh Missionary Society was given its impulse by the Missionary Society in London. [78]

However, although there was a shared sense of common urban problems, the framing of the regulations and objectives of voluntary associations was under the control of Edinburgh inhabitants (or their elite representatives). Regulations were often modelled on institutions in other towns. Indeed, some Edinburgh Societies themselves offered their published rules as templates for similar Societies in other parts of Scotland. In certain cases, Edinburgh was the location of a parent institution for a federation of affiliated Societies. Nevertheless, the assertion of independence from national movements by a town's subscribers was a characteristic feature of our period. The Bible Society, formed in 1809, was influenced by the British and Foreign Bible Society, but one of its founders, Christopher Anderson, thought it important that the Edinburgh Bible Society should be independent, retaining control of its own funds. An autonomous organisation allowed more sensitivity to local opinion, and Anderson was able to gain the support of some

established church ministers who did not sympathise with the British and Foreign Bible Society constitution. [79]

The urban-based nature of many of the voluntary associations of the 1780-1810 period was a pattern repeated in many British towns and cities. However, the characteristic of Edinburgh as a metropolitan centre meant that certain societies sought national influence. This was more true of medical, religious and educational societies than of poor relief, or cultural societies. The Asylum for the Relief of the Industrious Blind had only eighty-six out of three hundred and ninety-two subscribers from outside Edinburgh between 1794 and 1795, yet half its inmates came from outside the city. [80] The Lunatic Asylum was intended as a regional centre according to a plan which proposed to create four districts in Scotland with asylums for the care of the insane. Edinburgh was to be the centre for the Eastern District which comprised Roxburgh, Selkirk, Berwick, Peebles, Haddington, Linlithgow, Stirling, Fife, Kinross, Clackmannan and Perth. Nevertheless, the overwhelming majority of subscriptions came from Edinburgh. [81]

Some societies began with a local field of interest but extended their activities later on. The Society in Scotland for Promoting Religious Knowledge Among the Poor, established in 1786, first began to erect Sabbath Schools in Edinburgh and its immediate vicinity. However, by 1815 it reported that "since the establishment of a similar institution (probably the Edinburgh Gratis Sabbath School Society), whose exertions are exclusively confined to Edinburgh and its neighbourhood, the Society have found themselves called upon more particularly to direct their efforts to several manufacturing towns and country parishes in different parts of Scotland and even to

remote stations in Orkney and Zetland". [82] The Institution for Deaf and Dumb Children drew its support in its first five years almost exclusively from Edinburgh. However, as will be seen in Chapter Six, the institution attempted to support pupils from Scotland as a whole and increasingly tried to shift the burden of support away from Edinburgh subscribers. The Deaf and Dumb Institution was typical of the type of Society which sought to make Edinburgh the organisational focus for a national network of auxilliary societies. The Directors argued that "the institution of Auxilliary Societies is more to be desired than the formation of independent Societies supporting schools of their own ... the nature of the institution does not admit of that subdivision so desirable in all other seminaries. [84] In 1814 pupils were taken to Glasgow to perform a 'public examination'. This resulted in an auxiliary society being formed in that city. In 1817 a more extensive tour was undertaken, exhibiting pupils at Dundee, Aberdeen, Elgin, Inverness, Perth and "every considerable town" on this route. The 1818 report of the society portrayed it as being "... for the general benefit of Scotland, and it is therefore expected will meet the support of the country at large". [83] Societies of this kind sought to make Edinburgh the organisational focus of a national network of auxilliary societies.

Conclusions

This chapter has sought to contrast and compare different voluntary associations over time in order to explore continuities and changes. Our concern has been with the cultural form of voluntary associations rather than with their specific subject content. That is to say, we have examined the material form and practices of

voluntary associations as media through which the middle class made sense of and accommodated changes in Society, and defined and expressed various kinds of social identities.

The most common form of voluntary association for much of the 18th century had been the elitist, exclusive, ephemeral, introverted club which displayed a low degree of institutionalisation. In the 19th century, as we shall see in the following chapters, voluntary assocations came to provide a set of structures which allowed the urban middle class to define their role, as men of property, in providing for the material and spiritual welfare of the community. The 'Community' itself was defined by the organisational focus of the societies - for the elite, the town rather than the parish was to be the typical arena of social action. This social action - policing, provision of poor relief, distribution of religious tracts, the establishment of schools and medical institutions - involved the definition, expression, organisation and reproduction of a set of social relationships between those with power to participate in such societies and the 'objects' of these societies. The self-definition of the members of societies (reproduced in published rules and annual reports) and the definition of 'objects' involved the formation of a set of identities relating to class and power. The voluntary association became one institutional framework which provided a focus for the expression of these identities.

The voluntary associations of the period 1780 - 1810 are representative of a period of cultural transition between these two forms. Unsurprisingly perhaps, an overview of the range of societies founded in the period reveals a mix of types. Private clubs flourish alongside the increasingly common public institutions. Some

societies rely on elite patronage or the power of the local state, while others justify their actions on the basis of public support. Increasingly, the introverted, and sometimes hedonistic, activities of the club are becoming less common than those responding (more or less directly) to urban social problems. The urban middle class were the main participants in such societies. Many of the newer 'public' voluntary associations challenged, often only implicitly, the influence of established authorities of the church and local state, providing outlets for the expression of status and the exercise of power by an expanding middle class. Nevertheless, the legitimacy of public intervention by such societies was highly ambiguous, and often did not have public consensus. This ambiguous legitimacy was reflected in a low degree of institutionalisation in terms of a lack of regular or consistent organisational structures or levels of support.

This chapter on the developing trends of the cultural form of the voluntary association between 1780 and 1810 in Edinburgh, places us in a better position to understand their form and meaning in the 1810s when the number of foundations become much more numerous.

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CHAPTER FOUR

POLICING EDINBURGH: THE SOCIETY FOR THE SUPPRESSION OF BEGGARS

> "The swarm disappeared as soon as it was scared; and though it often returned, its settling or not settling just depended on the vigilence with which the flowers of bad charity it fed upon were crushed or fostered."
>
> Lord Cockburn,
> Memorials of his Time, pp.261-2.

This chapter is a case study of the Edinburgh Society for the Suppression of Beggars (SSB). The main aim of the Society was to give poor relief to persons who satisfied the Society's criteria of being in 'genuine' distress in order to isolate those 'deceitful' persons who gained subsistence by begging. This allowed justification for the magistrates to enforce the Vagrancy Acts against beggars. The objective of suppressing begging, therefore, involved the cooperation of the magistrates and town council. On the other hand, the activities of the Society involved wide public participation in matters of policing the city of Edinburgh. [1]

An examination of the wider context in which the SSB was formed, the socio-political relationships involved in its creation, its cultural form and the ideas which it disseminated will serve to illustrate the historical significance of the emerging new characteristics of voluntary associations which were identified in the previous chapter. It will be suggested that the SSB was effectively responsive to overt social crises which had induced men of property to fear the fragmentation of the bonds of social authority. Its effectiveness consisted of a mixture of informal social and economic sanctions harnessed to the prescriptive power of the local state. However, although the Society was elite-led and used the authority of the state, it was capable of attracting broad middle class support and participation. The cohesiveness of its actions, in poor relief, education, resettlement of migrants and employment agency, involved the definition and reproduction of the notion of 'public' interests. Those interests included the protection of property, the discriminate distribution of resources, commercial prosperity and stable social relationships. They were

congruent with the interests of property-owners, tax-payers and employers. This thesis argues that voluntary subscriptions were an expression of the affirmation of the right of the SSB, through its leadership to represent such interests. This involved a limited consensus on the legitimacy of informal institutions to intervene on matters of middle class interest and contributed to the greater institutionalisation of such intervention.

The SSB formed part of a set of diverse but coherent responses to perceived threats of public disorder around the year 1812. In particular such fears were exacerbated by a riot in Edinburgh on New Year's Eve, 1811. The riot acted as a catalyst for the mobilisation of public pressure for the reform of the system of police and provided an impetus for the formation of the SSB.

On the evening of the 31st December, 1811 and the morning of 1st January, 1812, the inhabitants of Edinburgh witnessed a series of premeditated, systematically organised and irrepressible muggings. [2] The attacks were highly visible, occurring close to the Tron Kirk in the High Street, Hunter Square and North and South Bridge where many prominent shops and businesses were located. The Caledonian Mercury reported the incidents in the following terms:

> "... the streets of this city were disgraced by a series of riots, outrages and robberies, hitherto, we may truly say, without any example. During almost the whole of the night after eleven o'clock, a gang of ferocious banditti, armed with bludgeons and other weapons, infested some of the leading streets of this metropolis, and knocked down and robbed, and otherwise most wantonly abused, almost every person who had the misfortune to fall in their way." [3]

The passage above reveals a number of important cultural expressions. Firstly, the attacks were regarded as unprecedented articulating the perception that the problems of public order were of

a new scale. Secondly, the 'leading streets' of the metropolis - streets used for the regular conduct of business - had been 'infested' by the antibodies of disorder. We shall see the idea of community outsiders as plague or disease repeated in discourses on begging. Thirdly, the notion that the city streets had themselves been disgraced reflects that idea that the reputation of the city was linked to the reputation of its inhabitants.

Of particular relevance to the development of policing, however, is the alarm caused by the organised nature of the attacks and the ineffectiveness of the means of suppressing this disorder. Both the Caledonian Mercury and the Scots Magazine had identical reports that the outrages, "... were chiefly committed by a band of idle apprentice boys, regularly organised for the purpose, and lurking in stairs and closes, from whence they issued, on a signal given, in large bands, and surrounded and overwhelmed those who were passing by." [4] There was a widespread feeling that the policing system had been completely inadequate in coping with the riot. This was an implicit criticism of the system of local government appointments. Many police officers were physically unfit for the job and had no qualification for police duty other than the nomination of the police commissioners. [5] Concerns such as this led to the passing of a new Police Act in 1812. We shall return to this in due course, but now we wish to examine more general attitudes to the nature of society and its social organisation.

The New Year's Eve riot was a cathartic event which exposed public anxieties about what kind of place Edinburgh was developing into. Debate took place at a public level. Two pamphlets will be analysed here which were published in direct response to the riot.

One, entitled 'A Blow at the Root' was "addressed to the citizens by a fellow citizen". The other was 'An Appeal to the Public' by 'a Friend to Order'. The anonymous authors in both pamphlets assumed an affinity of interest with men of influence and property within the Edinburgh community. The writers defined their audience and set the agenda for social action in ways which could serve as an ideological and institutional focus for middle class collective thought and behaviour.

'A Blow at the Root' adopted a censorial moral tone. [6] Much of the pamphlet was written like a catechism, posing the reader a set of questions. "Is the immorality of individuals and communities progressive? And, after it has arrived at a certain stage, incurable by human expedients? Is there a point in the scale of moral corruption which threatens the existence of communities, and at which revolutions, or dissolutions, have usually taken place?" [7] The questions construct a framework which defines the problematic of disorder in terms of a progressive scale of immorality which has potentially revolutionary consequences for the state of communities. The questions command affirmative answers, conditioned by an internal reference system which assumes the dissolution of individual morality to be the primary basis for social disorder. [8] The pamphleteer has a pessimistic view of societal development usually associated with Malthus and Ricardo who prophesised impending deterioration or, at best, the emergence of a 'stationary state'. [9]

The perspective of the pamphlet, however, is essentially backward-looking. The use of the notion of 'community' and the emphasis on the collective morality of the community is significant. It fears that the old face-to-face relationships of supervision and

discipline are becoming obsolete. It argues that the prevention of vice is to be achieved by instruction, restraint and example. This assumes a reaffirmation of parental control, magisterial authority and pastoral influence.

Thus, the author quotes Lord President Blair's opinion, dispensed by the General Assembly in 1787, that the laws against profaneness, drunkeness and all immorality were in full force and asks "what steps have been taken since then to enforce these laws by any church court or civil magistrate?" [10] It is asked how many of the clergy and families instruct the young by catechisms "as in the days of our Fathers", and notes how parochial visitations have become obsolete. [11] Much of the responsibility for a reformation of manners is seen as resting with the professional and business classes. It is persons "both of high and low rank" who do not attend church. Many are unnecessarily engaged in professions and occupations during the time of public worship. The author suggests, "Must not this tend to vitiate the morals of a numerous class of the community who are their inferiors, dependents or servants?" [12]

The writer significantly uses the older discourse of 'rank', 'superiority' and 'dependence' at a time when the very commercial practices which he deplores are creating new sorts of relationships which were sometimes in opposition to paternalistic discipline. When he initially defined his organisational vanguard in the reassertion of control in society 'character' was given equal weight to 'property' - "Let the body of inhabitants, who possess weight and influence from character and property, erect themselves into a Society like that in London, for the suppression of vice". [13]

The emphasis throughout the pamphlet was on investigation,

regulation and supervision. "What proportion of the city attend public worship, established or dissenting? Is the character of those granted licenses to retail liquor properly investigated?" [14] Venereal diseases had spread, according to professional expertise. Those in office had displayed either imbecility or indifference in their failure to exact the full rigour of the law.

It was clear that wider groups in the community, outwith the formally constituted authorities, would be required to participate in a regenerated society of supervision and social sanction. When Robert Johnston wrote to the Earl of Elgin in 1815, advising him on visitors to the poor in the light of his experience with the SSB, he noted, "you should take an ample range among your decent and respectable inhabitants; so as to give **all an interest**, and create a general spirit of inquiry and investigation". [15]

The second pamphlet under discussion, 'An Appeal to the Public', deals with the immediate problem of corrupt and inattentive 'inferior' police officers, but widens the issue into a defence of properly constituted authority which must maintain control against an antagonistic alternative moral order which had a set of values threatening to society.

The author argues that man emerges from a savage state with an enlarged capacity for reflection, and is persuaded of the expediency of promoting mutual welfare. A plan of order is developed, "capable of giving weight to their future regulation as a society, and to determine the extent of intercourse upon which its very existence must depend". [16] Coercive measures are taken to restrict deviants who "from the bent of misapplied reason obliterate the accurate distinction between their own and their neighbour's property". [17]

Such measures constitute a state. Incorporated bodies, whose constitutions essentially have the form of an interdependent gradation of offices, are "subservient ... to the security, regularity and justice of commercial adventure" and "consolidate and support the general prosperity of the state". [18] In this harmonious system a limited number of members of society, the most worthy members of the community, rule by the general voice of their body. People consent to live together under this 'implied will', even though their individual interests might differ. This system, "carries along with it implied beauty, order and efficacy". [19]

The events of New Year's Eve seemed to hold this whole political philosophy at defiance. The author clearly felt the need to assert older notions of hierarchy and governance by the worthy, legitimated by implied consent. This conservative political philosophy would not have been held by all his readership. Hence the warning that any attempt to hold the system at defiance "is as preposterous as that wretch who d-mns his blood, because it is liable to diseases, unmindful, notwithstanding, that it is the vital principle, the fountain of life". [20] The concern was that criticism of the corruption of police sinecures could widen into demands for broader political reform.

The author suggests that certain young men had alienated themselves from the society of industry and order. They had "detached themselves from society", "placed themselves beyond the pale of its privileges" and had taken "farewell of the world and the rank of accountable creatures". [21] Such people were considered to have a separate creed, and the author used a number of analogies to emphasise the idea of a consciously organised 'counter culture'.

Thus the criminals are said to have entered into a "contract with the powers of horror and darkness". [22] The language of commercial society is being transposed to describe the ties of organised criminals. At another point the author uses other images from the world of order - the militia - to describe how the youths had 'enlisted'.

Dismissing the excuses of necessity for criminal behaviour, the author adopts a similar framework for viewing the problem as that in 'A Blow at the Root'. Parents must imprint religious and moral principles - the neglect of this had become "too fashionable". [23] The laws should be rigorously executed. The root of the evil, however, was seen as being prostitution. In 'A Blow at the Root' it had been noted how prostitutes parade the streets in daylight, "... just as well known and distinguishable, by every passenger, as cattle for sale on market day". [24] Our second pamphleteer was even more explicit in placing prostitutes at the nexus of an alternative moral order: "Such creatures stand in the same capacity as directors of discord and agents of destruction, as the appointed authorities of society are supposed the vicigerants of justice and good order". [25] The prostitute is capable of "corroding the excellency of every enabling sentiment, and undermining the vitals of industry, economy and truth". [26]

In both the pamphlets we have studied how the specific threat of organised criminal gangs has been generalised to suggest a non-specific but all-engulfing threat to order, virtue and civilisation. Such publications were designed to call to the identities of those citizens who had an interest in order. At the same time such identities were being given definition. 'Order' was associated with

respect for authority, industry and the functioning of commercial society. This in turn was synonymous with reason and civilisation.

The 'friends of order' were also being given things to identify against. Certain groups on the periphery of ordered society were being categorised as 'beyond the pale'. In our period the middle class became increasingly involved in organisations which defined the place of such marginal groups in society and created institutional structures for dealing with them. For example, the Magdalene Asylum, instituted in 1797 to 'reclaim' prostitutes broadened its public appeal after 1812. [27] The Lunatic Asylum was opened in 1813. The immediate and specific response to the riot of New Year's Eve, however, was a reform of the system of policing in Edinburgh. The new policing system, formalised by the local Police Act of 1812, provided the impetus and framework for identifying and handling another peripheral group - beggars.

On the 15th January, 1812, Councillor James Innes, the convenor of the incorporated trades, proposed at a meeting of the town council that a committee be appointed from the council to confer with the Lord President of the Court of Session, the Lord Justice Clerk, the Lord Chief Baron of the Court of Exchequer, the Sheriff-Depute of Midlothian and the different 'public bodies' within the city. [28] His motion drew attention to the need to bring about "the establishment of a more vigorous and vigilant system of police". Innes' motion was passed unanimously. The various public bodies (principally the Faculty of Advocates, the Society of Writers to the Signet, the Merchant Company and the trades incorporations) each appointed a committee and these met at an aggregate meeting in the city chambers. They declared "almost without exception", that the

present system of police was "totally inadequate". [29] They passed a motion that the Police Act of 1805 be repealed. A committee of twenty-six was appointed at this meeting "to adopt such steps as to them may seem requisite". This committee was comprised almost exclusively of senior legal officials and members of the town council. It recommended a significant extension of policing, including nightly patrols of fifty paid officers. Control of a £500 fund for paying the officers was to be vested in the Lord Provost and Sheriff of Midlothian. [30]

The reform process was, therefore, highly undemocratic. It involved consultation only of closed, hierarchical bodies, and ultimately gave wide discretionary powers to an appointed committee. Some opposition to the arbitrary and unaccountable nature of policing policy was recorded. The Whig Caledonian Mercury hinted that the system of police was corrupt and inefficient and that, rather than spending more money on policing, the present legal assessment might be better used. Opposition to further police powers also came from the inhabitants of the southern suburbs of Edinburgh who had no wish to share the burden of an increased police tax. Such opposition, however, had little effect.

The new Police Act was approved in May, 1812. The Act specifically named the Commissioners of Police. There were to be annual elections for resident police commissioners. The 1805 Police Act had legislated for two resident commissioners for each of six wards. There were now to be three resident commissioners in twenty-six wards. The electoral franchise for these elections included voters with property of £10 or more rentable value (excluding shops and warehouses). This was the same as in 1805. However eligibility

to stand as a commissioner was restricted from £20 property holders in 1805 to £30 property holders in 1812. The inefficiency of the policing system, therefore, necessitated an extension of policing activity and wider local government participation by the middle class. However, access to positions of power in policing affairs was carefully controlled and restricted. These statements are also true for one area of responsibility stated in the Police Act - the suppression of begging.

The passing of the Police Act in 1812 provided the impetus to tackle head on the problematic of begging. At a meeting of the commissioners of police on July 6th, 1812 a committee was appointed to report on the best way of carrying into effect the part of the Police Act referring to common begging. The committee of nine included the Lord Provost and the Sheriff of Midlothian. It was chaired by a merchant called Robert Johnston. [31]

This group in turn embarked on a process of selective consultation. Their first published report listed 141 names which had been added to the original committee as well as the current commissioners of police and the resident baillies of the Canongate and Portsburgh. [32] The occupational composition of this expanded committee was as follows:

Committee Appointed by the Commissioners of Police (1812)

Occupation	Link 1	Link 8	Total	%
Agriculture	0	0	0	0
Distribution/Processing	11	6	17	11.3
Dealing	1	0	1	0.7
Commerce	12	4	16	10.7
Bankers	5	3	8	5.3
Agents	0	0	0	0
Clerks	0	0	0	0
Manufacturing	1	0	1	0.7
Craft	8	1	9	6.0
Professions	3	2	5	3.3

Committee Appointed by the Commissioners of Police (1812) (Cont.)

Occupation	Link 1	Link 8	Total	%
Medical Men	2	1	3	2.0
Legal Men	20	9	29	19.3
Religion	9	8	17	10.7
Miscellaneous Services	0	0	0	0
Construction	0	0	0	0
Independent Income	8	1	9	6.0
National Government	3	1	4	2.7
Local Government	2	0	2	1.3
Defence	1	0	1	0.7
Missing Observations	-	-	29	19.3
Totals	86	36	151	100.0

Occupational titles of committee members were known by linking their names to the Post Office Directory. Following nominal linkage principles which will be explained in Chapter Seven, unique name links (1) were treated separately from links made by supporting information (8). Links were successful for 122 committee members (80.7%). The distribution of occupational categories was markedly different to that which was observed in the population of the Post Office Directory. [33] There are roughly twice as many lawyers and merchants as might be expected. Bankers are also overrepresented. Those engaged in craft manufacturing are about one third of a figure to be expected from the Post Office Directory as a whole. The distributive trades are underrepresented. Finally, we may note the high proportion of clergy.

The high status nature of this appointed committee invested its proposals with social authority. Robert Johnston's own account of the origins of the SSB in a letter to George Rose at Bath is illuminating in the emphasis he puts on building support on the basis of the approbation of high status groups. Remarking on an initially lukewarm response, he circulated a pamphlet on the suppression of

begging in Hamburg "among the most respectable of the people taking care to carry the clergy with me, both regular and dissenting". [34] Johnston was also aware that the proposals of his committee gained influence by having "an identity with legal authority" - an idea impressed on the public mind by the numerous lawyers on the published committee list. [35]

The composition of the committee may also have reflected specific financial interests. The banking sector was crucial in providing loans to pay for policing. Individuals were held personally liable for such credit. For example, in July 1812 the Police Commissioners noted the approval by the Royal Bank of a cash credit of £3,000. Four Edinburgh merchants, Robert Hall, Kinkaid McKenzie, Alexander Craig and Robert Johnston and a bank agent called William Swan were named as securities. [36] Such money was to be repaid by raising tax revenue from inhabitants who were suspicious of corruption in local government. Bankers and merchants thus had a material investment in promoting public confidence in an efficient policing system. Confrontation with the highly visible problem of begging was one way to do this.

The committee quickly published and circulated a report which defined the problem of begging and recommended the establishment of a Society to deal with it. In the report beggars are generally assumed to be deceitful. The committee assert that "it is generally the idle and dissolute who resort to this line of life". [37] An important theme of the report was that indiscriminate charity encouraged begging and provided a disincentive to industry. This was considered to be harmful to the whole community. Emphasis was placed on the lack of regulation of access to subsistence for the poor. Beggars

calling at domestic houses were often given aid by credulous servants, "bestowing what is, properly speaking, not their own". [38] Persistent claims for relief by street beggars were thought to be intended to 'coerce' passers by.

The committee put forward the view that beggars were directly antagonistic to the interests of society as a whole. Their terms of reference were similar to those which we discussed in earlier pamphlets in that they identified peripheral groups as the antithesis of order. For example they say that indiscriminate charity "entails upon the public a succession of vagrants of the worst description, and poisons society with a race of people hostile to the real welfare of a country". [39]

Nevertheless the committee recognised that for some people there was no other means of subsistence other than begging. They suggested that some means should be devised for the 'truly' destitute in order that the magistrates could apply the full rigour of the law to cases not deemed genuine. To this end it was recommended that a Society be established "for the suppression of Vagrants, Street-beggars, and Imposters:- the relief of occasional distress, and encouragement of industry". [40] The committee was aware, through reading published reports, of similar Societies at Bath, Hull, Liverpool and Hamburg and they proposed to model the Edinburgh Society on these.

It is important to emphasise that, up to this point, the impetus for the response to the problem of begging had come from the socio-political elite. A committee of unelected police commissioners had engaged in a process of selective consultation with the town council and influential lawyers, merchants and bankers. However, in order to give the proposed scheme legitimacy and in sheer practical terms it

was necessary to broaden public support. The committee had noted in its report that in order to maintain public confidence in the proposed institution it would be necessary to obtain the aid of 'respectable individuals' in managing its funds and investigating cases of poor relief. [41]

The next stage in the formation of the SSB was, therefore, a public meeting. The meeting was held under the auspices of the commissioners of police on the 8th December, 1812. It was resolved unanimously at the meeting "That it was most wise and expedient that a Society be formed to suppress the Practice of Common Begging, and relieving the Industrious and Destitute Poor". [42] A committee was chosen to work out the details of such a scheme. Membership of this committee was highly restricted. Only three of its twenty-four members - the merchant Alexander Brunton and the lawyers Archibald Gibson and J.H. Forbes - had not been on the original committee consulted by the commissioners of police. Lawyers and merchants comprise the majority of the committee. Ministers from the Established, Episcopalian and Roman Catholic churches are included (although dissenters are not). The influence of established political authority was maintained - eight of the twenty-four members were police commissioners including the Lord Provost and the Sheriff of Midlothian. Baillie Robert Johnston was appointed convenor of the committee. Thus, access to power was carefully controlled at the same time as building public support.

This committee produced another report in January of 1813 which defined the nature of the Society, provided advice on how it should be set up and recommended policy guidelines for the proposed Society. The report specified the object of the society in the following

terms:

> "The object of the proposed Society is to enable the Local Magistracy to enforce the laws against vagrants, which it is impossible to do at present, while no means are held out for enabling many of them to support themselves in any other way than by street begging." [43]

It was recommended that the Society be called 'The Society for the Suppression of Beggars, for the Relief of Occasional Distress, and the Encouragement of Industry Among the Poor, within the city and environs of Edinburgh'. The relief of deserving cases of poverty was defined as a means towards the end of identifying, isolating and prosecuting vagrants.

The committee suggested that in order to achieve its object the Society was required to classify beggars according to their capacity to support themselves. In conflict with the idea that most beggars were idle, deceitful and dissolute there was an implicit awareness that the vagaries of the trade cycle, seasonality of employment and disability to work at certain stages in the life-cycle entitled certain categories of poor to temporary relief. The committee categorised four classes of poor:

1) Those who are unable to contribute anything to their own support, from old age, bodily infirmity or any other cause.

2) The partially disabled, who cannot altogether support themselves.

3) Those who are able and willing to work, but from trade fluctuation or any other cause are thrown out of employment.

4) Those who, though able and willing to work, prefer begging, as a trade, to any other employment. [44]

Thus, in spite of moral censure against begging, the committee's definition of the vagrancy problem showed an acute awareness of socio-economic causes. In order to achieve the Society's object, it

was necessary to identify the fourth category of beggars, refuse them aid and expose them to the full rigour of the law.

The committee recommended that the cases of all beggars who applied to the Society for relief should be carefully investigated. As we saw with the Society for the Relief of the Destitute Sick, this involved an extension of people involved in the supervision of the poor. In the SSB there was a careful filtering of access to such positions of power. The committee proposed that 'visitors' should be selected from the "most worthy and respectable members of society". [45] This recommendation was not simply the reproduction of power by a self-selecting elite. The terms 'worthy and respectable' referred to the kind of relationships in which high status groups were accorded social estimation by a majority. Thus, it was hoped to instil public confidence and produce consent to the objectives of the Society by placing the 'worthy and respectable' in positions which were influential in the distribution of resources. Potential supporters of the SSB were assured that charity would be well applied because investigation into cases would never be undertaken "by subordinate agents or servants, who are liable to be imposed upon". [46]

The policy guidelines recommended in the allocation of relief to cases of 'genuine' temporary distress revealed the concern with the wider aim of encouraging industry. The committee suggested that "It ought to be the object of the Society to distribute as little money as possible to the poor, till their sober habits are well ascertained by long experience ... The only deviation from this rule should be, that the poor be paid in money for their work. They would otherwise doubt that they had received the full reward for their labours". [47]

The distribution of food was assumed to be the best allocation of resources since it could be applied directly to satisfy a pre-defined subsistence level. Setting a minimum subsistence level provided a disincentive to begging. On the other hand, positive incentive to industry was provided by paying the poor money for work which made them "useful members of society". [48] Such a policy would, it was thought, habituate the poor to the relationships of wage labour and protect them from being exposed to the excesses of intemperance and vice. The provision of employment was considered to be an important branch of the Society "both in a political and religious point of view". [49]

On the 25th of January the SSB was instituted at a meeting of the 'inhabitants'. The committee's report formed the basis of framing the constitution of the Society and defining its aims and principles. It was at this stage that public participation in the Society became much wider. However access to power was still carefully regulated. Only those who subscribed one guinea or more annually or made a donation of five guineas or more were considered to be members and entitled to vote at General Meetings of the Society.

From the start, the SSB operated in conjunction with the policing authorities. On the 20th of February, a proclamation was read by the magistrates and sheriff warning beggars to give up by the end of the month. All beggars with no legal claim to poor relief in the city of Edinburgh were to return to their original parishes. All beggars were invited to attend the offices of the SSB to have their cases examined. By the 10th March, the police received notice that they could arrest any person found begging in the streets.

A system of investigation into those who had applied at the Society's office for relief was established. The city was divided into twenty-six wards, identical with those described in the Police Act of 1812. [50] This would have allowed efficient liason with the magistrates and police commissioners in each district. The directors of the Society, who had been chosen at the public meeting in January, were assigned to each district to collect subscriptions and to find 'proper' persons to act as visitors. The high-status directors, largely the same lawyers, clergy and police commissioners who had formed the Society's policy, were to use their influence to mobilise funds. Also, they would carefully select investigators of the poor who were sympathetic to the aims of the Society rather than the claims of poor relief applicants.

Moreover, a checklist of inquiries which visitors were to make served to give coherence to the criteria for allocating relief, as well as setting the framework within which cases were to be judged. The questionnaire for the use of visitors outlined the following lines of inquiry:

1) Age
2) Whether married
3) Number, ages and sex of children
4) Place of residence
5) How long in Edinburgh
6) Circumstances of distress
7) Employment
8) Usual earnings
9) Legal parish
10) Aid already received
11) References to character

In a general sense, such investigations reflected a felt need to classify the urban population, rendering it subject to identification and ordering. This idea was also reflected in the development of prisons, hospitals and asylums for the mentally, physically and morally 'disordered'. [51]

The need for investigation and supervision of poor relief

claimants was, however, more than the reflection of enlightenment ideas about clarity, cohesion and order. The nature of the Edinburgh economy gave rise to a transient population. The lack of accountability of this population provided opportunities for crime and deception. It also meant increasing poor rates, not subject to public control.

Edinburgh, as a centre of consumption, interacted with the surrounding countryside as a market for locally produced goods. Between May and August the city attracted the gentry from the country and elsewhere in Scotland. The added purchasing power of these elite groups created opportunities in the labour market for seasonally unemployed agricultural workers. The social season also provided lucrative markets for prostitutes and beggars.

The problem of migrants seeking temporary relief in the city by begging is revealed by a synopsis of the ways in which cases were disposed of by the Society between 1813 and 1820. 32.7% of all applicants were given money to leave town. In fact, in most years most applicants were from outside Edinburgh.

Disposal of Applicants to the Society for the Suppression of Begging

Year	New Applicants	Given work	Money to leave	Workhouse	Retained
1813	415	153	101	75	86
1814	143	44	53	1	42
1815	106	16	62	0	28
1816	44	15	20	0	9
1817	227	100	47	0	80
1818	62	26	12	0	24
1819	56	11	31	0	14
1820	100	20	51	0	29
Totals	1153	385	377	76	312

After 1820, the difficulty which the Society faced in lacking the formal power to ensure that migrants returned to their own parish, led it to discontinue the practice of giving money to migrants for

this purpose. [52] By the mid 1820s it is possible to detect a more realistic assessment of migrant labourers which did not view them as merely parasites. The 12th report of the SSB suggests that in earlier years persons "had resorted to the city, and for years had taken up their residence there, as a place well adapted to carrying on their indolent and ... lucrative trade of begging". [53] Such persons had been forced to 'decamp' and had not been allowed to return permanently. Edinburgh beggars now, asserted the report, "are principally either natives of the place thrown into distress, or those who originally came in quest of labour, which they have been unable to procure". [54]

The population of Edinburgh was also in a state of fluctuation during the course of any one year. The figures for employment by the work committee of the SSB reflect the seasonal difficulties experienced by the labour force.

Employment by the Work Committee by Month and Year

	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Average
1813-14	69	70	75	83	81	81	74	62	57	46	47	54	66.6
1814-15	53	52	53	54	52	51	53	54	49	43	39	40	49.4
1815-16	43	45	47	50	50	52	50	48	52	52	50	43	48.5
1816-17	48	62	67	79	92	93	97	99	93	96	83	84	82.7
1817-18	93	88	82	80	88	91	85	64	57	45	40	46	71.5
1818-19	43	44	49	52	49	46	39	34	34	23	23	35	39.2
1819-20	48	52	60	52	59	55	47	56	44	40	39	47	49.9
1820-21	51	59	63	60	56	52	50	40	33	32	31	27	46.2
1821-22	28	29	32	28	30	27	25	19	17	17	18	19	24.1
1822-23	18	20	20	33	27	22	26	30	32	33	28	26	26.2
Average	49	52	56	57	58	57	55	51	47	43	40	42	50.4

The monthly employment figures display a fluctuation which demonstrate the ability of the Society to assimilate the seasonal difficulties of beggars. A fairly clear pattern emerges whereby unemployed beggars were most numerous in a steady rising rate from November with a peak occurring in March. The figures then decline when opportunities in

the service trades were created by an influx of inhabitants for summer balls, races and events such as the General Assembly in May. The low point of employment by the work committee occurred in August and September when women were attracted by the higher wages to be earned in agricultural employment.

Thus, the problem of begging (and its associated threats of crime and prostitution) highlighted the rootlessness of large parts of the urban population. This rootlessness posed particular problems of control for the bourgeosie. Begging destabilised the urban market by distributing resources in an uncontrolled, indiscriminate way. Also, it encouraged people to subsist on the periphery of the urban economy, unsympathetic to the disciplines of industry. The policing of beggars expressed the social power to control the urban environment by defining 'legitimate' ties for the urban poor and criminalising begging as a means of subsistence. The SSB created specific institutions for exercising this control, which we shall now examine more closely.

Four committees of directors were established. The first examined the cases of individual applicants for relief on the basis of information provided by visitors. The directors had a range of options for 'disposing' of cases. For example, between March and October, 1813, a total of 623 cases were treated in the following ways:

Did not call again: 68
Charity Workhouse: 75
Temporary relief pending medical report: 36
Temporary relief from other causes: 86
Referred to Work Committee: 153
Received relief to leave town: 101
No relief, not objects of SSB: 104

The treatment of applicants was in line with the guiding principles

and aims of the Society. About one third of applicants did not fall within the definition of those considered legitimate recipients of relief. They either received no relief or were given a few shillings to leave town (on pain of arrest). About one quarter of applicants in 1813 were referred to the work committee. We can see from the table of cases disposed of between 1813 and 1820, that this was the most common treatment of applications in the 1810s. The policy was consistent with the view that money should, where possible, only be given in return for labour. Robert Johnston emphasised this in correspondence with the Earl of Elgin in 1815 - "no aid should be given in money, and no aid at all except in desperate cases, without some exertion on the part of the pauper to an exercise of industry". [55]

The function of the second sub-committee of directors was to superintend those able to partly support themselves and to find jobs for them. Potential employers were urged to co-operate with the Society in providing employment for its applicants. [56] The Society for its part served a useful function of vetting employees. Workers could be coerced into accepting employers' conditions of labour by the threat of future relief being withheld if employment terms were broken.

Employment was provided by the SSB itself for beggars who manufacturers had been unwilling to employ (the Society was anxious not to restrict employers' access to labour). There had been a certain opposition to this policy but the directors argued "the principle on which it is founded we conceive to be one of the clearest propositions in the interesting science of political economy". [57] Paid work for women in spinning flax and worsted

stockings was provided. Wages were deliberately kept low in order not to attract too many claimants. It was argued that high wages would have forced employers to offer comparable rates to attract workers and would force up prices.

A committee of ladies had charge of supervising and allocating work done by applicants. They were in attendance between one o'clock and four o'clock at the Society's repository, where work was given out and taken in. The nature of their role required them to possess substantial resources of leisure time. The Ladies committee was of high status including, for example, Lady Charlotte Hope, Miss Erskine of Mar and Mrs. Gordon of Craig. However, the distribution of power within the SSB along lines of gender is significant - the women had no influence over who were to be under their charge.

Although yarn was given out to employees for them to work domestically, supervision and control was tight. Soup tickets were not renewed until overdue work was handed in. Anyone found to be employing others to do their work were to be refused all further aid. Threads of yarn were counted before workers were paid. Positive wage incentives were also considered important. One of the ladies provided a premium for the most industrious, clean and sober worker. The wider aim was to habituate an amenable labour force to industrialising society.

The third of the sub-committees of directors was responsible for the superintendence of education and instruction of children. The idle youth were thought to be a major source of disorder and vice. The youthfulness of those tried for the murder of police watchman Duguld Campbell in the aftermath of the New Year's Eve riot made a vivid impression on the public imagination.

Visitors of the poor investigated applicants' children and would advise as to the type of employment for which they were fitted. The SSB procured apprenticeships for some boys, although its success in this field was limited. However, through the twin mechanisms of restraint on begging and the threat of withdrawing aid if children remained idle, the Society reported that many parents had been induced to put their children into employment.

In May, 1813 the Society engaged someone to instruct young girls in the manufacture of straw plaiting. This 'school of industry and moral instruction' was aimed at girls who, in the judgement of the directors, had acquired all necessary education. They were to attend until they were of an age fit for going into service. Domestic service was the primary source of female employment in Edinburgh and the surrounding area, and thus represented the main alternative to begging and prostitution for an underemployed female labour force. [58] It was also common practice of the Edinburgh Magdalene Asylum to send 'reclaimed' prostitutes into domestic service. [59]

Constrained by the cost of providing youth employment, and apparently unable to engage co-operation of employers to provide apprenticeships for the stigmatised children of beggars, the SSB concentrated on providing day-school instruction for children. The Police Committee had explicitly stated that children should, ideally, be kept entirely separate from the bad example of their parents. [60] The opaque family and neighbourhood networks of the city were a constraint on exercising control (by the middle class) over the 'rising generation'. It was admitted that the cost of accommodation made permanent separation of parents from children impractical. Day-time schooling was seen as a compromise, "whereas, if the children be

kept from the contagion of bad example throughout the day, and taught the blessings of industry and virtue, it may be expected that the injury they will sustain from the society of their parents, will not be so great as is apprehended". [61]

The limited resources of the SSB forced it to rely on other institutional networks. Children were to be sent to one of the recently opened parochial school which were under the control of kirk sessions. The school chosen was in Leith Wynd in the Canongate district. In 1814 the children's committee reported that there were 558 children dependent on 555 paupers. Children could either apply for admission to the school or were directed to attend. Withdrawal of aid was the sanction for non-attendance. Punctuality, diligence and attentiveness were required "as the only means of ensuring the future countenance of the Society". [62]

However, the Society were unsuccessful at coercing the attendance of children. Only 85 children originally attended and it was reported that "a considerable number soon became irregular in their attendance and some quitted it altogether". [63] By the end of the year only 36 children attended. The admission fee of 6d. would undoubtedly have been a deterrent to many parents. Also, regular school attendance was incompatible with the mobility of the labouring population. The reduction in school attendance was attributed to parents leaving Edinburgh either permanently or for occasional employment.

The fourth sub-committee of directors was to arrange for the provision of food and to attend its distribution. Once again, the emphasis was on the proper supervision and control of the distribution of resources.

The establishment of public kitchens for the relief of the poor was a regular occurrence in this period. In 1812, for example, some attempt had been made to co-ordinate the distribution of broth in response to high oatmeal prices and unemployment. [64] In this venture £120 was raised in subscriptions and soup was distributed from a kitchen at the back of a meeting house (perhaps suggesting dissenting involvement). Visitors of the Society for the Relief of the Destitute Sick were asked to deliver meal tickets to proper objects. However, such ventures were characteristically not constituted on a permanent basis.

The SSB established food distribution on a regular basis. Collections of cold meat were now to be made on behalf of the Society. The Society was given ground owned by J.F. Erskine of Mar, opposite the high-status Episcopalian Chapel in the Cowgate, from which to distribute food. An allowance of one chopin (32 ounces) of soup and eight ounces of wheaten bread were given to approved applicants on production of a ticket. This amount was judged to be a basic subsistence of two meals in a day. Once more, the directors were guided by principles of political economy. Aid was confined only to those who had formerly subsisted by street begging to prevent the Society being "encumbered with the charge of the whole poor of Edinburgh, who would have left their present employments to flock to the Society for work, allured by the temptation of receiving aid from the soup kitchen, besides the full value price of their labour". [65]

The inspection of the poor was extended in other ways under the auspices of the Society. A medical board was established which allocated a physician and a surgeon to the specific wards defined under the 1812 Police Act. The intention was to use professional

inquiry and discretion to prevent bad health being used as a mere pretext for unemployment. The function of the medical board was to "ascertain the truth or falsehood of the pretences of those who alleged that they were unable to work on account of bad health, and to assist the poor who might be labouring under any disease requiring medical assistance". [66] This definition once more reveals the suspicion of the begging poor. The managers of the public dispensary undertook to supply medicine to those recommended by the Society and the infirmary accepted patients 'belonging' to the Society on 'liberal terms'. Here, as in other areas, the Society was acting as a channel of regulation through which properly recommended persons were permitted access to 'public' resources (i.e. resources funded by the voluntary or legally assessed contributions of the middle class).

In fulfilling a multiplicity of functions the Society not only interconnected with other institutions but also overlapped with certain of their activities. Thus the provision of linen for women in childbirth, for example, supplemented the role of the Edinburgh Lying-In Hospital. This branch of the Society predated the more specialised Society for the Relief of Poor Married Women of Respectable Character when in Childbed, founded in 1821. The SSB stated that women must be married and of good character to receive this form of aid. Linen was lent out for a month. Inducement to return it promptly was given by the offer of children's clothing. Economic efficiency lay behind this policy - "the greatest advantages have been experienced in restoring the mother sooner, and in a more healthy state, to the active charge of her family". [67]

The interlocking institutional network designed by the Society both reflected and developed a set of social attitudes which was best

expressed in the second of the police commissioners' committee reports. This stated that the object of the Society was not merely to give to the poor but to "take a fatherly charge of them". [68] It was proposed to give financial assistance to the various charitable institutions of the city who were seen as fostering the plan of the SSB by their relief of cases of 'real' distress. It was reported that "an extension of the plans of the House of Industry (which accommodated the SSB's straw plaiting work) will demand early attention, as well as of the Public Dispensary, the Magdalene and Lunatic Asylums, the Lying-In Hospital, and various other charitable institutions for specific purposes". [69] The intention may have been to establish the SSB as a co-ordinated city-wide parent institution which could attract public subscriptions on a large scale and then distribute these to appropriately sanctioned agencies dealing with more specialised areas of care and control. This ability to deploy financial resources would have given the directors wide ranging influence in areas of public affairs normally restricted to town councillors, magistrates and kirk sessions.

The SSB, however, was unable to sustain the initial impetus it had in attracting wide public support in the wake of police reform and anxieties about disorder. The following table, compiled from the available annual reports of the Society, shows a marked contrast between the first and second half of the decade. In its first year the Society had attracted a wide range of support. It published a subscription list of 2563 names. Those subscribing half a guinea or more totalled 937. The majority of those were guinea subscribers - the minimum amount necessary for 'membership' of the Society. These numbered 604. A further 96 names had subscribed two guineas.

Subscriptions and Expenditure, Society for Suppression of Begging, 1813-1823

Year	Subscriptions	Expenditure *	Credit in Hand
1813	£2063	£824	£1254
1813-14	Not known	795	452
1814-15	972	443	1006
1815-16	Not known	432	654
1816-17	528	913	211
1817-18	618	550	235
1818-19	492	473	201
1819-20	478	515	147
1820-21	449#	434	141
1821-22	403	282	172
1822-23	399	230	180

Excluding a legacy of £500

* These figures refer specifically to the expenditure of the four main sub-committees of directors.

A further 683 names were listed separately as having made a donation of half a quinea of more. However, from 1817 onwards subscriptions and cash in hand fell. By 1821 the number of subscribers was only 454, and subcriptions of less than half a guinea were infrequently mentioned (suggesting a narrowing of the social base of support).

The persistence of begging sapped public confidence in the efficacy of the Society. The 9th report of the SSB noted that "The directors are well aware that, on the alleged ground of its failure, contributions have, from time to time, been withdrawn from their funds". [70] The SSB was a public institution, accountable to its subscribers and reliant on their financial sanction. Earlier optimism that begging could be completely eradicated has now been modified. The Directors state that "they would be deceiving themselves and the public were they to hold out any expectation of the entire removal of an evil which never can be under their complete control". [71]

This was an articulation of the essential ambiguity of the Society. On the one hand, it had no formal power within the local state to bear directly on the control of beggars, the policy of policing or the allocation of resources by the wider public. Yet, despite this, it did have a series of self-legitimating controls and sactions over the poor. Broadly, these included the investigation of the poor and the allocation and withdrawal of food, money and employment. They also sought to influence magistrates and the police executive (of whom many of their directors were members) in executing the laws on vagrancy. Also, through the medium of the published annual report, they constantly tried to influence the wider public by encouraging them to avoid 'promiscuous' charity, while arguing that the SSB was best placed to judge all private solicitations for charity. The private voluntary assocation was, in these ways, assigning to itself a public role.

The success of the SSB depended not only on the exertions of its members but on the co-operation of the local state and the attitudes of the wider public towards private charity. The Society implicitly sought universal public support to guarantee the successful accomplishment of its aims.

This aspiration to universalise the principles of the Society was extended to include other towns in Scotland. The goal of influencing the leading inhabitants of other towns to follow the principles of the SSB, enhanced the standing of the Society and the status of its directors. They could use the Society as a vehicle for shaping national policy towards the begging problem without recourse to the formal state apparatus.

Although constraints of time precluded any systematic study of

similar Societies elsewhere, there is some evidence to suggest that the Edinburgh plan was used as a model in other places. An abstract of the Edinburgh Society's first report was published in Greenock in 1815. A foreword included the following warning, "From the measures adopted by the Edinburgh Society, for the expulsion of all mendicants not belonging to the parishes of the city, and which are likely to be followed by the erection of similar Institutions throughout most of the populous towns in the Kingdom, this evil may be expected to be increased amongst us, if not ameliorated or restricted in like manner". [72]

A uniformity of policy throughout the country was necessary to dam up the sources of subsistence to a migrant population. Indeed, schemes for the suppression of begging created their own impetus since areas with lax supervision of beggars were thought likely to attract such people. In 1814 a Society for the Suppression of Begging was instituted in Perth and the following year witnessed the establishment of similar Societies in Glasgow and Aberdeen. [73] The Edinburgh SSB expressed the hope that simultaneous efforts could take place throughout the country. However, it conceded that "such a union of action, however, is perhaps unattainable; but the nearer the approximation to this universality takes place, the more efficacious the measures in each individual instance will prove". [74] This wider problem of co-ordinating action between different urban centres illustrates the limits of urban-based social action.

Despite the picture of a steady decline in support, the SSB had, from the outset, faced opposition from within the middle class. This opposition took a variety of forms. Firstly, there were those who doubted the efficacy of a voluntary association in coping with the

problem of begging. Robert Johnston noted how "initially, even my old and best friends considered the task as quite intolerable". [75]

This scepticism was related to another strand of opposition which regarded the position of the directors of the institution as sinecures. No direct evidence of this type of criticism has been found, but the frequent denial by the directors that their office was a sinecure, indicates a sensitivity to the issue.

Secondly, there were those who feared that an institution such as the SSB "would augment pauperism rather than diminish it". [76] The suggestion, common in writings on poverty, was that the guaranteed provision of relief for paupers would attract the idle and dissolute and provide a disincentive to industry.

Thirdly, in contradiction to this ideological strand, a section of middle class opinion considered the policies of the SSB too severe on the poor. In 1823, for example, the directors addressed themselves to those who felt the Society to be "too harsh and severe", arguing that it was so only to the idle and profligate. This kind of opposition to the Society may have found expression in the continuance of private charity to beggars by those who refused to accept the legitimacy of the SSB in interfering with the traditional face-to-face paternalism of the private benefactor. Within the Society, support was lost from contributors who, having recommended a person for relief, found their client's case rejected by the Directors. The 1828 report points out this intra-class relationship when it stated that the directors and recommending contributors "stand in very different situations". [77]

A common theme to these (often conflicting) oppositional strands was a distrust or outright opposition to the institutionalised nature

of the Society, and a questioning of the legitimacy of the power of the directors of the SSB.

Conclusions

The SSB was capable, in its early years, of mobilising support from a wide range of status groups within the middle class. The highly visable public nuisance of begging and pervasive fears of disorder in 1812 were powerful incentives which gelled public opinion.

The practices of the SSB were an intensification of the identification, categorisation, surveillance and control of the poor. In particular the Society regulated access to means of subsistence by aiding those who conformed to attitudes and behaviour appropriate to the capitalist economy and criminalised begging which did not conform to such standards. [78] Thus the institution of the SSB and policing activity related to it facilitated the development of new relationships which were beneficial to the interests of the bourgeosie.

The nature of the SSB and policing in Edinburgh was itself influenced by the social structure. Broad-based mobilisation of middle class support for the suppression of begging can be seen in the context of increasing demands for more open and effective local government and wider access to power. Electoral franchises for police commissioners and eligibility to stand as police commissioners represented a limited democratisation in local politics which predated the electoral and burgh reforms of the 1830s.

Nevertheless, the established political authorities in Edinburgh were successful in accommodating pressure for change and were influential in forming the SSB, formulating its policies and

occupying positions of power within the organisation.

The broad range of interests which the Society covered - food distribution, resettlement of migrants, coercion of beggars, provision of work, medical supervision, education of children - had wide appeal and created new 'informal' power structures outwith the local or national state. This multi-function Society clearly attracted wide support because each member's own interpretation of the problematic of begging could find expression in the objectives of the Society. Each branch of the institution was run in accordance with the principles of political economy, but there was no explicit attempt to integrate the various departments into an overall system of class supervision.

However, one effect of an organisation such as the SSB was the development of common social identities by its supporters, reinforced by persistently operating forms of collective action and mutually acknowledged mechanisms for regulating relationships within and between classes. Although the impetus for policing reform came from the formal institutions of the local state, effective action required broad consent and participation. 'Respectable' and 'worthy' inhabitants of the town, 'men of character and property', were defined by SSB publicists as having a common interest in maintaining order, controlling access to charity and shaping an industrious workforce habituated to wage labour. The SSB provided a new institutional focus in which to express these identities and interests.

As the next two chapters will show, the middle class elite in Edinburgh developed similar institutional frameworks in the fields of religion and education for making sense of themselves and handling

relationships with the working classes. Like the SSB, these were typically broadly-based and operated outside the formally constituted agencies of church and state, often indirectly challenging their exclusivist power but drawing on their social authority to attract support.

ENDNOTES

1. By 'policing' we shall usually have in mind the broad 18th century notion of the promotion of the public good. See, for example, J. Erskine, An Institute of the Law of Scotland, Edinburgh, 1773 who states that the principal laws of police "are calculated for the providing all the members of the community with a sufficient quantity of the necessaries of life at reasonable rates, and for the preventing of dearth", p.765

2. The riot is mentioned in Kenneth Logue, Popular Disturbances in Scotland, 1780-1815, pp.187-190. Most attention is paid to the crown prosecutions of the rioters.

3. Caledonian Mercury, January 2nd, 1812.

4. Caledonian Mercury, January 2nd, 1812;
Scots Magazine, lxxiv (1812) p.74.

5. Minutes of the Commissioners of Police, 5th October, 1812.

6. Anon., A Blow at the Root, Edinburgh, 1812.

7. Ibid., pp. 5-6.

8. See Louis Althusser's definition of the 'problematic' in For Marx, London, New Left Books, 1977.

9. Gareth Stedman-Jones, Outcast London, London, Peregrine Books, 1984, pp.1-16.

10. A Blow, p.13.

11. Ibid., p.8.

12. Ibid., p.11.

13. Ibid., p.4.

14. Ibid., p.12.

15. R. Johnston to Earl of Elgin, 3rd February, 1815. Emphasis in original. (This correspondence is held in the library of the University of Edinburgh).

16. Anon., An Appeal to the Public, Edinburgh, 1812, p.10.

17. Ibid., p.11.

18. Ibid., p.11.

19. Ibid., p.12.

20. Ibid., p.12.

21. Ibid., p.13.

22. Ibid., p.14.

23. Ibid., p.16.

24. A Blow at the Root, op.cit., p.10. The allusion to the world of 'legitimate' commerical intercourse is, again, significiant.

25. An Appeal, p.18.

26. Ibid., p.17.

27. Report of the Society for the Support of the Magdalene Asylum, 1819.

28. Minutes of the Town Council, 15th January, 1812.

29. Minutes of the Town Council, 29th January, 1812.

30. Minutes of the Town Council, 15th April, 1812.

31. General Minutes of the Edinburgh Commissioners of Police, 6th July, 1812.

32. Report of the Committee appointed by the Commissioners of Police to Inquire into the Practicality of Suppressing the Practice of Common Begging, Edinburgh, 1812.

33. See my sample of the Post Office Directory of 1812-13.

34. R. Johnston to Rt. Hon. George Rose, 13th November, 1815.

35. Ibid.

36. General Minutes of the Edinburgh Commissioners of Police, 24th July, 1812.

37. Report, 1812, op.cit., p.3.

38. Ibid., p.5.

39. Ibid., p.4.

40. Ibid., p.8.

41. Ibid. p.10.

42. Report of the Committee appointed at a Meeting of the Commissioners of Police and other inhabitants of the city of Edinburgh, 1813.

43. Ibid., p.3.

44. Ibid., p.4.

45. Ibid., p.16.

46. Ibid., p.6.

47. Ibid., p.13.

48. Ibid., p.14.

49. Ibid., pp.11-12.

50. Most of the information about the Society's organisation and activities is taken from the First Report of the Society for the Suppression of Beggars, 1814.

51. Thomas A. Markhus (ed.), Order in Space and Society, Edinburgh, Mainstream, 1982.

52. Report, 1820, p.14.

53. Report, 1824, p.11.

54. Ibid., p.11.

55. R. Johnston to Earl of Elgin, 1815.

56. Report of the committee ..., 1813, , p.10.

57. First report, 1814, , p.27.

58. The 1841 Census returns indicate that 70.36% of the female occupied population in Edinburgh were involved in the domestic service sector as a whole, compared with 31.60% in Glasgow, 40.37% in Aberdeen and 27.30% in Dundee. See Richard Rodger, 'Employment, wages and poverty in Scottish cities, 1841-1914' in George Gordon (ed.), Perspectives of the Scottish City, Aberdeen University Press, 1985.

59. Edinburgh Magdalene Asylum. Committee Minute Book, 1812-1834.

60. Report, op.cit., 1813, p.14.

61. Ibid., p.14.

62. Report, 1814, op.cit., p.32.

63. Ibid., p.32.

64. Minutes of the Commissioners of Police, September 14th and October 1st, 1812.

65. Report, 1814, op.cit., p.11.

66. Ibid., p. 8., my emphasis.

67. Ibid., p.14.

68. Report of the Committee appointed ..., 1813, p.13.

69. Ibid., p.12.

70. Report, 1822, p.9.

71. Ibid., p.13.

72. Plan of an Institution for the Suppression of Begging, Greenock, 1815.

73. These are mentioned in the 2nd and 3rd Reports of the Edinburgh Society for the Suppression of Begging.

74. Report, 1815, p.32.

75. R. Johnston to George Rose, 13th November, 1815.

76. Report, 1825, p.10.

77. Report, 1828, p.21.

78. For a wider discussion of this theme see W. G. Garson, 'Policing the periphery : the development of Scottish policing, 1795-1900', Australian and New Zealand Journal of Criminology, 17 (1984) and 18 (1985).

CHAPTER FIVE

RELIGIOUS VOLUNTARY ASSOCIATIONS, 1780-1820

Introduction

This chapter examines the emergence and development of religious voluntary associations in late 18th and early 19th century Edinburgh. They are of three main types: Missionary Societies, those promoting religious education, and those encouraging the distribution of bibles and religious tracts. Our focus, therefore, shall be on organisations whose primary aim was the literal or oral dissemination of tenets of the Christian creed. [1]

We have defined our area of study carefully because the description of 'religious' as a type of voluntary association should be treated cautiously. In several important senses, most Societies of our period were religious. The poor, the sick, the ignorant and the disorderly were described in terms of their adherence to the paths of virtue and their proximity to God. The objectives of charitable and (especially) educational ventures were never only secular. The encouragement of literacy (enabling access to religious scriptures), inducements to industry for the destitute, the 'reclaiming' of the blind, insane and diseased, were all seen as means of saving souls as much as improving the prosperity of the community.

Moreover, there was often an institutional interpenetration of religious and secular organisations. As we saw in the previous chapter, many voluntary associations relied on the clergy and church congregations for moral and financial support. Ministers were commonly to be found on the committees of 'secular' organisations. They promoted the objects of Societies from the pulpit and encouraged congregational collection on their behalf. Conversely, religious voluntary associations saw part of their role as aiding secular charities. The Edinburgh Bible Society, for example, made financial

contributions to the Charity Workhouse, the Magdalene Asylum, the Destitute Sick Society and the Lancastrian School Society.

The decision to devote a chapter specifically to missionary, sabbath school and bible Societies is justified by the extent to which a diagnosis of such institutions elaborate the wider concerns of this thesis. Generally, we wish to identify the emergence of the middle class in Edinburgh as a coherent, self-aware social formation. Religious activity was an important generator of two cruical elements of middle class formation: the development of collective organisations which formed a basis for the exercise of power, and the development of media which contributed to the reproduction of social identities. Interdenominational religious Societies provided a basis for common action by a broad social front. As Thomas Chalmers put it:

> "In such associations, the rich and the poor meet together. They share in one object, and are united by the sympathy of one feeling, and of one interest. We have not to look far into human nature to be convinced of the happy and the harmonising influence which this must have upon society, and how in the flow of one common cordiality, all asperity and discontent must give way to the kindlier principles of our nature." [2]

We shall explore which social groups had the power to define and direct those common interests, and the extent to which they consistently included class-specific interests.

We must not assume that the social identities which were expressed by participation in religious voluntary Societies were simply congruent with middle class interests in the economic and political spheres. Religious pluralisation in this period produced foci of competing social identities and ideological contradictions. Of particular importance was the growth of Presbyterian dissent

which, according to Callum Brown, "represented the greatest institutionalised division in eighteenth century Scottish Society". [3] Such divisions often went beyond church life and could have powerful influences on a persons's social networks. Religion was an important source of identity, often cutting across alignments of economic or Party interest, and the tone and content of the language of different religious orientations could be used by various middle class groups to make sense of themselves and their experiences. [4]

In late eighteenth and early nineteenth century Edinburgh, Dissent was an increasingly popular, although still minority, focus for religious loyalties. Its rise was an expression and perpetuation of the disintegration of urban parochial paternalism which has been mentioned in previous chapters. Religious affiliation potentially provided new ties of belonging for socially marginal groups. No particular social class fits neatly into a particular sect, but Dissenters and Evangelicals were associated with lower middle and working classes. They were often viewed by the elite-led Moderate Party of the Established Church as socially disruptive and sympathetic to radicalism.

Religious voluntary associations provided potentially powerful foci of collective thought and action for disparate religious groups who were sidelined from the mainstream of civil and religious political authority. Their purposes and their constituencies of support could be defined in ways which suppressed references to denominational differences and emphasised unifying strands of identity. The strategy of appealing directly to the "public" on a cross-parochial and interdenominational basis was an implicit challenge to the authority of the Established Church, particularly

when it was asserted by voluntary associations that the support of subscribers gave legitimacy to the diffusion of pastoral care by laymen.

This chapter explores to what extent such organisations were able to function in the urban community as cohesive forces of influence, expressing common interests, and asks what sort of influence they tried to exert. It will examine how far their attempts to organise on an interdenominational basis were challenged or accommodated by the Established Church. Ultimately, it will diagnose the effect of religious activism on the social formation of the middle class and the sense of their role in Edinburgh.

The methodology is interpretative. We shall seek to interrogate the cultural products of religion, such as sermons and annual reports of voluntary associations, in order to draw inferences about what social and ideological functions religion served. Those inferences will be supported by information about the social characteristics of those who produced and consumed those cultural products. Ultimately, we are required to make judgements about the social meaning of the cultural form and content of religious voluntary societies for their affiliates in order to 'reconstruct' emergent social formations. [5]

Edinburgh Churches

The significance of religious voluntary activity must be understood in the context of the increasing pluralisation of religious adherence in late eighteenth century and early nineteenth century Scotland. [6] The period witnessed popular support for the Evangelical strand of the Established Church as well as the proliferation of dissenting congregations. In the absence of detailed information about the composition of congregations, the following

sketch of the religious map of Edinburgh is drawn largely in terms of churches and their ministers.

The Established Church was the dominant force in Scottish religious life. In Edinburgh their ministers were selected by the town council. By 1819 there were 15 parish churches in Edinburgh (including the Canongate, North and South Leith and St. Cuthbert's). There were also five chapels of ease. [7]

Within the Established Church there were differences of party, doctrine and social attitudes, between the Moderates and the Evangelicals. The Moderates espoused a rationalistic theology which emphasised moral conduct rather than the doctrine of original sin. They appealed to the landed interest and the urban elite. [8] Edinburgh lawyers effectively managed the dominance of the party at the General Assembly up to 1833. [9] Closely aligned to the Dundas interest in the 1790s, the Moderates were also the party of the civil political establishment.

The Evangelical party of the Established Church had broad social appeal and were numerically dominant in Scotland during our period. They were distinguished from the Moderates by their fervent tone and emphasis on sin, grace and redemption. Their sense of the urgency of action to build a godly commonwealth in the face of imminent moral and political disaster provided the impetus for much voluntary society activity. Although characterised by their opponents as dangerous democrats, the Evangelicals were theologically and politically conservative. Over the key issue of patronage, for example, they commonly advocated a policy of selection which gave most influence to landed property-owners rather than sovereignty of the people. [10]

Although ministers such as Andrew Thompson of St. George's parish were important in accommodating strands of evangelicalism within an ecclesiastically and politically conservative Established Kirk, dissenting churches grew rapidly in the late eighteenth century. Scottish secessional churches increased from 45 congregations in 1750 to 302 in 1800. [11] In Edinburgh, by 1819 there were 14 dissenting presbyterian churches, including six Burgher congregations, four Anti-Burgher and four of the Relief Church. [12] Many seceders were tainted with political suspicion because they refused allegiance to the constitution which acknowledged the ecclesiastical supremacy of the Crown. [13] Support for dissenting presbyterianism came largely from the lower middle class, artisans and peasantry. [14] Hugh Miller, an Edinburgh mason, recalled that in the early 19th century "... the working men of Edinburgh and its neighbourhood, at this timne, were in large part either non-religious, or included within the Independent or Secession Pale." [15]

The Episcopalian Church in Edinburgh was characterised by its support from the elite. On the occasion of the confirmation of David Sandford as bishop of Edinburgh in 1806, the influential banker Sir William Forbes wrote, "It could not be but very edifying to every seriously disposed person to see our chapel, which is the largest in the country, filled with a numerous congregation of the upper ranks of life". [16] The wealth of Episcopalians may be inferred from the raising of a subscription to build Charlotte Chapel in the 1790's "in a few days". [17] Work on St. John's Episcopal Chapel began in 1816 at a cost of £18,013, financed by donations and subscriptions of £20 shares. [18] There were three other Episcopal Chapels in Edinburgh

in this period, including one in Leith.

From the 1790s congregationalists were highly active in projects of religious education and tract distribution. Such activities attracted fierce opposition from the Established Church. Robert Haldane's Society for Propagating the Gospel at Home was condemned by the General Assembly in 1799. The Assembly issued a Pastoral Admonition which stated, "There have arisen among us a set of men whose proceedings threaten no small disorder to the country". [19] Robert Haldane privately financed a chapel in Leith Walk (the approach road from Leith to Edinburgh) where his brother James Alexander Haldane preached from 1801. [20] In 1808 part of this congregation began meeting in rented rooms in Thistle Street before they erected a church in Albany Street in 1816. William Innes and George Payne were ministers of this congregation. Another key congregationalist was John Aikman who privately financed the building of a church in College Street in 1802, where he preached until 1834, assisted by George Cowie (1804-13) and John Cleghorn (1814-34).

The congregationalists had close affinity with the Baptists. James Haldane was a strong influence on the Baptist preacher Christopher Anderson. Haldane himself became a Baptist in 1806. In Edinburgh there was a Baptist Church in Bristo Place which had a plurality of ministers including Archibald McLean (1768-1812), William Braidwood (1774-1830), Henry David Inglis (1784-1806) and William Peddie (1810-30). [21] A congregation which met in Richmond Court Chapel moved to St. Celia's Hall im Niddry Wynd in 1802. The hall was sold in 1809 and a new chapel opened in the Pleasance in 1811. Members of this congregation were said to be "leaders in the inception of insurance and other commercial enterprises". [22] There

was also a Baptist congregation led by Rev. Dr. William Innes (a former congregationalist) which met in Laing's Academy, Thistle Street. In 1813 they moved to premises in nearby Elder Street, after which time their numbers greatly increased. [23]

Christopher Anderson, a key instigator of the Edinburgh Bible Society and the Edinburgh Gaelic School Society, deserves particular mention. Anderson, the son of an Edinburgh ironmonger, forsook potential earnings of £400 per year as manager of the Friendly Insurance office to become an English Baptist. [24] After two years in England he returned to Edinburgh and purchased Richmond Court Chapel (formerly owned by the Scottish Baptists) in 1806, becoming pastor of a congregation there in 1808. By 1809 the membership was 31, although his audiences reached up to 300. Anderson's preaching was clearly popular among different hues of dissent. By 1816 he was writing to a friend that the chapel "is now too strait for us ... Not only do all denominations attend us in the evenings, but people of the best rank in Society, which considering the situation, is the more remarkable." [25]

Methodism was numerically less important in Scotland than it was in England. By 1819 membership in Scotland as a whole was 3786. [26] In Edinburgh a congregation had been established in 1761. Following the buying of their chapel in the Calton district by the Lords Commissioners as part of the Regent Bridge development, a large chapel was built in 1815 in Nicolson Street at a cost of £5,500. The expense was met through loans rather than subscriptions. [27] The relatively low social status of the Methodists may be inferred from the occupations of the trustees of the chapel. They were overwhelmingly engaged in craft manufacturing associated with small

scale production. [28]

The 1810s appear to have witnessed a growth in Independent Churches in Edinburgh. At the beginning of the decade only St. Mary's Chapel was mentioned in newspapers. However, in 1819 Stark counted four Independent Churches. [29] A congregation of Universalist Dissenters existed in Edinburgh since 1776 and adopted the Unitarian name around the turn of the century. They had a precarious existence, not erecting a chapel or having a settled minister until 1823. The Scottish Unitarian Association was founded in 1813 in the face of "heated orthodox opposition". [30] There was a Gaelic Chapel in Edinburgh which was, according to one contemporary, "for the accommodation of the lower class of persons who resort to Edinburgh from the Highlands, and who act in great numbers in the capacity of chairmen, porters and servants". [31] There was also a Quaker congregation, a congregation of Glassites, of Bereans and of Roman Catholics. Stark also mentions a New Jerusalem Temple.

The growth of both Presbyterian and non-Presbyterian dissent in the late 18th and early 19th century, as indicated by this sketch of the establishment of churches and congregations, provides the context for our discussion of religious voluntary associations. This plurarlisation challenged the authority of the Established Church to exclusively regulate the provision of religious instruction and the distribution of religious literature. Voluntary associations were institutions which had the flexibility to cut across parochial and sectarian boundaries, to provide the opportunity for collective action in the religious sphere. They also had the potential to provide a focus of common interest for the wide range of status groups which religious sectariarism tended to institutionalise. High

status Moderates and Episcopalians might subscribe to the same objects as the low status Methodists.

Yet, what were the limits of this ecumenical coherence? In this chapter we shall examine to what extent religious voluntary associations perpetuated or overcame competing social and religious identities.

Aims and Objectives of Religious Voluntary Associations, 1785-1820

It is intended to go beyond a straightforward narrative account of the stated aims and objective achievements of religious voluntary Societies. We are not primarily concerned with the number of sabbath schools established, the number of pupils attending them, the number of missionaries sent abroad, the number of religious tracts and bibles printed and distributed, and so on. Our main concern is with interpreting the specific cultural forms through which these activities were conducted. It will be assumed that the creation of these cultural forms was expressive of common social interests, some of which were class specific, and that engaging in such cultural practices had the effect of contributing to class formation in so far as common interests were consistently experienced and reproduced. Specifically. we wish to organise this broad interpretative scheme around the concepts of class cohesion and intra-class division. We shall examine how religious Societies provided a platform on which co-operation on matters of mutual interest could be achieved between people of different social and religious identities. Yet we shall also explore what competition between Societies revealed about the obstacles to middle class cohesion, focusing in particular on the competing affiliations of the Established and Dissenting Churches.

Much of our analysis, therefore, will be concerned with that

which was not consciously articulated or expresssed. Voluntary associations play a multiplicity of roles both for their members and non-members. Only some of those roles are stated overtly. Religious associations in our period, overtly defined their roles in terms of spreading the Word of God, leading souls to salvation and creating a virtuous and harmonious civil society. These aims were expressed in annual reports, sermons and public addresses. As with poor relief Societies, they tended to be other-directed. They are what we shall call primary purposes. Secondary purposes included the provision of channels of access to power and influence, the creation of a platform for collective action based on mutual interest, the formation of a consciousness of collective identities and the provision of an outlet for the expression of those identities. These tended not to be overtly stated and were directed towards the benefit of the members.

In this section it is intended to map out the terrain by briefly describing the primary purposes of religious voluntary associations between 1785 and 1820.

The first spate of activity in our period was in the late 1780s which saw the emergence of the sunday-school movement in Scotland. [32] In Edinburgh in 1786 there was the foundation of the Society in Scotland for Promoting Religious Knowledge Among the Poor (SSPRK). The objective of this Society was to counteract "the alarming decline of Religion and the rapid progress of immorality, particularly among the lower classes of men". [33] A published account of the Society explained that "their primary aim was to furnish them [the poor] with such means of instruction as were best fitted to bring them to a just acquaintance with the Truths of Christianity". [34] A number of

methods were tried to achieve this aim. Bibles, testaments and treatises were distributed. A library of religious books was collected. However, the main focus of activity was on the institution of sabbath evening schools. At these, approved teachers would conduct catechetical exercises. Although the contributors to the Society were mostly from Edinburgh, their activities were nationwide. By 1815, only one of its twenty-nine sabbath schools was in Edinburgh. [35]

The progress of the SSPRK was piecemeal. Only seven schools had been established up to 1795. There was a general lull in religious voluntary activity in the early 1790s, when all reform movements were regarded as potentially subversive. A renewed wave of reform occurred in the mid-1790s. In 1796 the Edinburgh Missionary Society was established by the congregationalist Greville Ewing. [36] The Society co-operated with the interdenominational Glasgow and London Missionary Societies in raising funds to send missionaries abroad.

The concern with missionary activity abroad was combined with a desire to spread religion at home. In 1795, the Edinburgh Religious Tract Society was founded. The Society sought to spread the "free course of the Word" by printing and distributing tracts, books and Bibles. [37] For an annual contribution of five shillings a member received six copies of every new tract printed and had the opportunity to buy tracts from the Society's repository at reduced prices. Individual members could then patronise their selected objects of charity by giving them copies of the tracts gratis. The Society as an institution also directly distributed free tracts to perceived cases of need such as charity schools, convicts awaiting transportation and the inmates of the infirmary, bridewell and

prison.

There was also renewed impetus to the sunday-school movement in this period with the establishment, in 1796, of the Edinburgh Gratis Sabbath School Society (EGSSS). In October, 1796 members of various denominations "met to pray for the revival of religion at home and the spread of the gospel abroad". [38] A few months later they formed the EGSSS whose object was "to promote the Religious Instruction of Youth, by erecting, supporting and conducting Sabbath Evening Schools in Edinburgh and its neighbourhood". [39] The Society raised funds from subscriptions, donations and collections to finance the rent of schoolrooms and the purchase of books and stationery. Children were to be taught "the leading and most important doctrines of the scriptures" by teachers drawn from the Society's membership. [40] By 1814, the Society was operating 55 schools comprising 3170 pupils. [41]

Robert Haldane's Society for the Propagation of the Gospel at Home extended the Scottish sunday-school movement in the late 1790s. However there were no new Edinburgh-based religious Society foundations until 1809 when the Edinburgh Bible Society (EBS) was instituted. The Society aimed to distribute Bibles to the poor. It also sold Bibles and testaments to members, funded oriental translations of the Bible for the Baptist Missionary Society and donated funds to other Societies, especially the British and Foreign Bible Society (BFBS). The EBS clearly acted as an auxiliary to the BFBS, yet wished to be independent of it. This object was institutionalised in the Society's laws which stated, "The designation of the Society shall be the 'Edinburgh Bible Society', having the same object in view with the British and Foreign Bible

Society; and to act in concert with it, or separately, as circumstances shall require". [42]

The EBS influenced the establishment of auxiliary Societies both within Edinburgh and nationwide. These essentially functioned to collect subscriptions and transfer the funds to the parent institution in Edinburgh. Commonly, low-status subscribers contributed a penny a week. The EBS expressly did not attempt to interfere with the management of the auxiliaries. It did, however, seek to influence the format of the Societies by publishing a model resolution which could form the basis of the constitution for any potentially new auxiliary.

At the same time as the EBS was formed, ministers of the Presbytery of Edinburgh established the Scottish Bible Society. Annual reports of this Society could not be located. However, it is clear that it engaged in similar activities to that of the EBS.

As we saw in Chapter Four, the year 1812 saw wide-ranging middle class action in response to pervasive fears of disorder. In this year there was also a widening of public involvement in religious activity, both in terms of an increase in the number of organisational foci and more widespread support for existing institutions. Older Societies such as the Religious Tract Society and the Gratis Sabbath School Society attracted wider support. There was also an increased frequency of new Societies founded. Apart from auxiliary Bible Societies (notably the influential New Town Auxiliary) two new missionary Societies were instituted as were sunday-schools by the Established Church.

In 1812 the Edinburgh Auxiliary Missionary Society was instituted. The object of the Society was "to aid with its funds the

London Missionary Society." [43] Up to 1815 sums were donated exclusively to the London Society. However, after this time money was also given to the Scottish (formerly the Edinburgh) Missionary Society, the Baptist Missionary Society, the Church of England Missionary Society, Moravian Missions and the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society. [44] The EAMS sought to attract a wide range of contributors by accepting subscriptions of a penny a week.

Further missionary activity in 1812 took the form of the establishment of the Edinburgh Society for Promoting Christianity Among the Jews. This Society circulated tracts and supported the sending of foreign missionaries among "the lost sheep of the house of Israel". [45] A similar Society had been established in London in 1809 which co-operated with the Edinburgh Society, mainly by donating Hebrew texts. However, the independence of the Edinburgh Society was emphasised. Details of this Society are scant, but it appears to have attracted little support until 1820 when it planned to establish a mission on the continent. [46]

Also in 1812, the Established Church drew up a scheme of Parochial Institutions for Religious Education. A sunday-school for the poor was to be opened in each parish under the superintendence of five ministers and five elders. [47] The scheme was hampered by widespread illiteracy among the pupils leading to the opening of the Edinburgh Sessional School in April, 1813 which provided secular education but was annexed to the parochial institutions.

Most Societies experienced growth in terms of members and funds up to the mid 1810s, but there were no new foundations between 1813 and 1815. In 1816 there was an attempt to put the expanding number of sabbath-schools in Scotland under a centralised influence based in

Edinburgh. The Sabbath School Union for Scotland was formed in the January of this year. Its purpose, as stated in its first law, was "to encourage, unite and increase Sabbath Schools and Societies in Scotland". [48] Auxiliary Societies to the SSU were given autonomy in the crucial areas of control of funds and management of schools. However, the SSU selected and published reading materials for schools, which Societies could buy at reduced prices from a central repository. The Union also influenced the content and mode of teaching by making premiums available and providing 'hints' to teachers through the medium of its published annual reports.

These are the main public voluntary associations which we have identified in the sphere of religion which were founded between 1785 and 1820. Individual sects and congregations clearly were also active in this period. We know, for example, that by 1818 five Methodist sunday-schools had been instituted in Edinburgh. [49] However, our concern here is with the cultural significance of Societies which were self-consciously 'public' and which were town-wide rather than organised on the level of the congregation or presbytery or parish. We are concerned with Societies which addressed themselves to the literate public in Edinburgh, characteristically publishing their aims, giving account of their progress and advertising the names of their affiliates. We must now look more closely at the nature and significance of the 'public' facet of religious voluntary Societies.

Answering the Call

The Societies which have been described in the above section sought to support their activities through the financial contributions of members. To some extent membership required

assenting to the generalised principles and objectives upon which the Society was founded and adhering to a usually formalised set of rules. However, much more crucially, membership was dependent on payment of a specified minimum subscription. Subscription rates varied, but on the whole they were lower than those for Societies in the educational, medical and policing charities. Regulations for the following Societies were available.

Minimum Membership Subscriptions per annum to Religious Societies

Edinburgh Society for Promoting Christianity Among the Jews	10/6d
Edinburgh Bible Society	10/-
Edinburgh Religious Tract Society	5/-
Sabbath School Union for Scotland	5/-
Edinburgh Auxillary Missionary Society	(penny a week) 4/4d
Edinburgh Gratis Sabbath School Society	no limit

Only the Sabbath School Society did not have a minimum subscription requirement. In this Society, members had to have been recommended by two existing members and then were elected at general meetings. Although such practices of social closure were typical of the form of the elitist associations which we discussed in Chapter Three, the EGSSS attracted a wide subscription range of between 2/6d. and one guinea.

The effect of these membership regulations was to make religious voluntary associations institutions which could be the vehicle of expression of common interests for people of very different economic interests and status groups. To demonstrate this more clearly, it is necessary to look at the social composition of the subscribers to these associations. Information about the occupations of subscibers was likely to be of most use. As was explained in Chapter Two, occupational titles carried implicit information about wealth, status and economic relationships.

Subscription lists identified members by name and either address or occupation or both. To achieve consistency it was decided to link names, where possible, to the Post Office Directories. The occupational information about all subscribers to the Edinburgh Bible Society, 1811-1812 and the Edinburgh Gratis Sabbath School Society, 1815-1816 who could be identified in the Post Office Directories was collected. This information was classified according to the occupational classification scheme which was discussed in Chapter Two. The following results were produced:

Occupational Classification of Subscribers to Two Religious Societies [50]

Occupation	Edinburgh Bible Society	Edinburgh Sabbath School Society
Agriculture	4 (1.11%)	0
Distribution/Processing	35 (9.72%)	20 (8.40%)
Dealing	5 (1.39%)	3 (1.26%)
Commerce	34 (9.44%)	25 (10.50%)
Banking	8 (2.22%)	3 (1.26%)
Agents	1 (0.28%)	0
Clerks	2 (0.55%)	0
Manufacturing	5 (1.39%)	7 (2.94%)
Craft	27 (7.50%)	9 (3.78%)
Professions	5 (1.39%)	3 (1.26%)
Medicine	3 (0.83%)	7 (2.94%)
Legal	19 (5.27%)	39 (16.39%)
Religion	15 (4.17%)	15 (6.30%)
Miscellaneous Professions	5 (1.39%)	3 (1.26%)
Building	4 (1.11%)	0
National Government	6 (1.67%)	2 (0.84%)
Local Government	1 (0.28%)	2 (0.84%)
Defence	1 (0.28%)	1 (0.42%)
No occupation	9 (2.50%)	8 (3.36%)
Females	37 (10.28%)	49 (20.59%)
Anonymous Subscribers	49 (13.61%)	25 (10.50%)
Non-Edinburgh Subscribers	56 (15.55%)	8 (3.36%)
Missing Cases	29 (8.05%)	9 (3.78%)
Totals	360 (100%)	238 (100%)

The numbers of non-Edinburgh and anonymous subscribers, particularly in the Bible Society, give a slightly confusing

impression of the frequency of occupational groups. To clarify matters, a second set of calculations excluded these categories, giving the following results:

Occupation	Edinburgh Bible Society	Edinburgh Sabbath School Society
Agriculture	4 (1.57%)	0
Distribution/Processing	35 (13.72%)	20 (9.76%)
Dealing	5 (1.96%)	3 (1.46%)
Commerce	34 (13.33%)	25 (12.19%)
Banking	8 (3.14%)	3 (1.46%)
Agents	1 (0.39%)	0
Clerks	2 (0.78%)	0
Manufacturing	5 (1.96%)	7 (3.41%)
Craft	27 (10.59%)	9 (4.39%)
Professions	5 (1.96%)	3 (1.46%)
Medicine	3 (1.18%)	7 (3.41%)
Legal	19 (7.45%)	39 (19.02%)
Religion	15 (5.88%)	15 (7.32%)
Miscellaneous Professions	5 (1.96%)	3 (1.46%)
Building	4 (1.57%)	0
National Government	6 (2.35%)	2 (0.98%)
Local Government	1 (0.39%)	2 (0.98%)
Defence	1 (0.39%)	1 (0.49%)
No occupation	9 (3.53%)	8 (3.90%)
Females	37 (14.51%)	49 (23.96%)
Missing Cases	29 (11.37%)	9 (4.39%)
Totals	255 (100%)	205 (100%)

In both Societies there is a fairly even distribution of the main occupational categories. The frequency of the high status merchants and warehousemen in the 'commerce' category is almost matched by the more lowly shopkeepers in the 'distribution/ processing' category. In the Bible Society, the figure for those engaged in manufacturing (including craft manufacturing) is similar to those for commerce and distribution/ processing. There is rather less support by manufacturers for the Sabbath School Society. In both Societies there is much less numerical dominance by the legal profession than was witnessed in the committee appointed to investigate the problem of begging (see Chapter Four). Lawyers are

indeed the most frequent type of occupation in the Sabbath School Society. From our sample of the Post Office Directory population (Chapter Two) we might 'expect' a frequency of 9.01%. They exceed this expectation by a ratio of 2.04 on the basis of our second table. However in the Bible Society there are fewer lawyers than we might expect, the observed-expected ratio dropping to 0.83. Finally, we may note that these Societies, particularly the Sabbath School Society, attracted a high proportion of female affiliates. These were largely women of leisure. In the case of the Sabbath School Society, of the women who could be identified in the Post Office Directory, only two were listed with an occupation (milliner and perfumer).

The members of these Societies were overwhelmingly middle class. However support for certain Societies could extend to sections of the working classes through the institutions of auxiliary Societies. Networks of auxiliaries were developed especially by the Bible and Missionary Societies. Small contributions of a penny a week could co-opt working people to the general aims of the parent institutions without according them the status of members.

Auxiliaries to the Edinburgh Bible Society started to form towards the end of 1811. An auxiliary known as the Edinburgh Association held its second General Meeting in September 1812, by which time it had 60 collectors of subscriptions in the city and suburbs, and nearly 800 subscribers. Subscriptions were low, amounting to only £43 for the first quarter of the year. [51]

The Old Town (middle district) auxiliary association held its third General Meeting in the Congregationalist St. Mary's Chapel on 21st December, 1812. It was reported that the quarterly

subscriptions raised by contributions of a penny a week had increased by half, totalling £68. [52] Assuming all subscribers paid a penny a week, this figure implies a total of 1360 subscribers.

By 1813 there were eight auxiliary Societies in the City of Edinburgh, making total contributions of £886. [53] Town districts rather than parochial boundaries were the bases of organisation for these auxiliaries. There was an Eastern, Western, Middle, Northern and Southern auxiliary, as well as Juvenile, Youth and Female Servant Societies.

The broad support for associations such as the Edinburgh Bible Society was an important influence on the ordering of social relationships in the city. Many were influenced by Chalmers' notion of assimilating the face-to-face paternalism of a country parish to the town. Chalmers suggested that every arrangement which "multiplies the topics and the occurrences of intercourse between the higher and the lower orders of society" was beneficial to both political economy and the improvement of morals. Bible Societies provided a focus for such intercourse, as rich and poor cooperated for a common object around common values which they diffused to the wider community. Thus the poor were encouraged, through the medium of sermons and annual reports to identify with the interests and objects defined by a middle class leadership. At the same time they were discouraged from feelings of affinity with the destitute. Chalmers argued that making contributions to a Bible Society imparted "a tone of dignity and independence" to the subscriber. [55] He goes on, "A man by becoming the member of a benevolent association, puts himself into the situation of a giver. He stands at a greater distance than before from the situation of a receiver". Having

created this "distance", Chalmers argued that it was made more degrading for the giver to traverse the gulf to receiver.

As with other types of Societies, the religious voluntary association thus had the effect of fostering a particular kind of social identity whereby subscribers to an association of common interest could define themselves in terms of their role as benefactors. Part of that self-definition was a conscious disassociation from the 'objects' of their charity.

Thus, religious voluntary associations were institutions which cemented a diversity of inter and intra - class interests. In what ways was this cohesion achieved?

The literary media through which Societies were advertised were important mechanisms for creating cohesion. Annual reports, published sermons and reports of meetings in newspapers were documents addressed to the public rather than particular congregations. The linguistic terms of these publications was essentially vocative. They were calls to action, intended to evoke or exhort a personal response from the reader. In this context, the terms of address by which the reader was called became an important subject of diagnosis for the historian. For in order to be effective (and, indeed, affective) the appeal had to be addressed in terms which readers would want to recognise as part of their own self-definition. Thus to diagnose the terms which evoked action, is to understand the basis of common identities around which people could cohere.

Religious voluntary Societies directed their appeals at Christians. The term was deliberately inclusive of all denominations. As the Edinburgh Religious Tract Society claimed,

organisations were based on the "union and harmony of all Christians". [56] At a time of considerable religious schism, Societies sought to exclude doctrinal controversy from their proceedings. The first rule of the Edinburgh Gratis Sabbath School Society was: "This Society shall be composed of Christians of every denomination, who are of one mind respecting the leading doctrines of Christianity". [57] Similarly, the Edinburgh Bible Society stressed its ecumenical appeal. This was formalised in its laws where it was stated that "The Society shall consist of all who are disposed to promote the object of the Institution without regard to difference of religious sentiment". [58] Membership of the Society implied consent to the idea that denominational loyalties should not constrain collective action. The rule defining the inter-denominational character of the Bible Society was adopted, word for word, by the Edinburgh Auxiliary Missionary Society in 1812. [59] In its address to the public in 1813, the Society sought to identify the principle of ecumenical action with a progressive modern trend. They claimed that in recent years there had been a "decline in party rancour and schismatical authority" and the rise of an enlightened, generous catholic spirit. [60] This spirit was seen as highly pervasive: "the same liberal and noble spirit has happily been carried into almost all recent associations for meliorating, in any respect, the physical or intellectual, the civil or political, the moral or religious condition of Britons, and of mankind". [61] The address argued that the exclusive spirit of the schismatics who claimed ecumenicism was a danger to church and state (a reference to spokesmen of the Established Church) was now contrary to prevailing opinion.

The appeal to all 'Christians', therefore, often encoded a call

to certain political identities which may be broadly characterised as liberal. Evidence of party political allegiances is hard to find. The Edinburgh Poll Book of 1832 is unsuited to nominal record linkage because of the distance in time between it and the generation of documents in the 1810s. Nevertheless, certain key religious figures of the 1810s appear in the Poll Book. The Dissenters James Peddie, Christopher Anderson, John Aikman, and John Jamieson were all listed as Whig supporters. Established Church ministers George Baird, T.S. Jones, David Ritchie, and James Inglis were Tory voters. At the heart of these identities was opposition to the notion of the unique authority of the Established Church in religious affairs. By creating a broad front of Christian adherents of dissenting congregations which were marginal in Society could identify themselves with the mainstream and characterise their opponents in the Established Church as sectarian.

However, appeals to subscribers of religious voluntary associations sought to evoke a response by calling to secular socio-political identities. A common theme was the call to the active citizen who had a duty towards the welfare of civil society. It was argued that religious voluntary associations influenced civil society by creating virtuous members of the community who would foster rationally ordered, harmonious relationships. The appeal was aimed at the middle class interest in order.

Thus, the Edinburgh Gratis Sabbath School Society, publishing an appeal for support in the year of a riot in Edinburgh and nationwide Luddite disturbances, declared that "religion is the only solid basis of true social virtue in all its parts" and a man's "individual excellence gives beauty and strength to society". [62] Their vision

was of a society in which heads of families would display "domestic virtues of love, harmony, peace, integrity, benevolence and compassion in the different relations of husband and wife, of parents and children, of masters and servants". This vision could only be realised by leading the working classes out of ignorance and wickedness: "the labouring part of the community is most numerous, and its moral state of the last importance to the well-being of society". [64] The appeal was aimed at class-based identities. It addressed and sought to inform "those who do not converse much with men in different stations". [65] It struck a chord with the middle class perception that the ignorance of the working classes led to iniquity, vice and disorder. It was acknowledged that children of the rich were also in need of instruction, but this was largely because of their ignorance on points of doctrine rather than their threat to society.

The concern with an orderly society and the control of the labouring classes was also a theme addressed to potential supporters of tract and Bible Societies. The Edinburgh Bible Society claimed that "every person who feels anxious about the improvement or well-being of civil society, is here also deeply interested". [66] Middle class prejudices linking poverty to moral ignorance may be inferred from the use of visitors of the Destitute Sick Society to investigate families who did not possess a Bible. The threat to disorder posed by the uncontrolled access to printed material for the working classes was made explicit by the Religious Tract Society in the aftermath of the 1820 rising. They claimed that "a taste for loose and promiscuous reading, to which our countrymen were formerly strangers, has, within these few years become almost universal". [67]

Pernicious publications had been scattered over the country by "the emissaries of obscenity, blasphemy and rebellion". [68]

The call to religious activity was made, however, not only in terms of those with an interest in christian benevolence, but was addressed particularly to groups in society with power. The Auxiliary Missionary Society appealed especially to the 'opulent'. Using the language of commerce with which they could identify, it called on them to "lodge your stock in the funds of the Kingdom that cannot be moved". [69]

Similarly, the Gratis Sabbath School Society adopted a tone of evangelical exhortion to address those with wealth and influence. Wealth and power conferred sacred obligation: "whosoever has the power to do good, has a call to do good". [70] The call was to 'fathers', 'masters', 'good women', 'pious young ladies', 'ministers of Christ', 'Christians of eminence for knowledge, judgement, zeal and standing in the Church', 'pious young men', 'devout women', 'young females (many of you have leisure, many of you have influence)', 'rich disciples of Jesus (your wealth gives you influence and opportunities of being useful'. [71] Thus the address was to people who had a consciousness of their social position.

In ideological terms, therefore, religious voluntary Societies projected their aims and objectives in a way which identified them with the interests of a constituency which they called the 'public'. The language they used carried the assumption that this public was the middle class. Their interests were described in broad enough terms to evoke a collective response from individuals who were otherwise divided on grounds of wealth, status and religious doctrine. This cohesiveness was also achieved in other ways, which

we shall now examine.

Directors, Members and Public

Published annual reports addressed the public in the name of the committee of directors on behalf of the members. The directors had a responsibility to present an account of the Society's progress and its financial state. Their names usually appeared prominently near the beginning of the report. They collectively represented the interests of the Society and its members.

Moreover, the agreed rules of the Society accorded the directors specific powers. In the Gratis Sabbath School Society, directors examined and selected teachers. In missionary Societies they decided on the distribution of funds to other institutions. In Bible and Tract Societies they could select books and pamphlets.

Therefore, the denominational characteristics of the directors was an important indicator to potential subscribers of the religious identity of the institution. In order to attract broad religious support, and to uphold its claim as a public rather than a sectarian association, the committee needed to be interdenominational.

In another sense, the committee of directors reflected the interests of the members. In an interdenominational Society, the collective interests of the members lay in maintaining consensus. Consensus could best be maintained by selecting a balanced committee of different religious affiliations. Typically, rules prescribed that a certain number of directors would retire annually in rotation. Their replacements were chosen by the members attending the annual general meeting. Reports of such meetings imply that lists of new directors were prepared in advance, proposed to the meeting and unanimously approved.

The following table describes the religious affiliations of the ministers who were listed as committee members of the Edinburgh Bible Society between 1810 and 1813. The secretaries included the Baptist Christopher Anderson and James Peddie of the Burgher Church. The treasurer was the Episcopalian banker Sir William Forbes.

Denominational Characteristics of the Edinburgh Bible Society, 1810-1813

Year	Established Church	Episcopalian	Presbyterian Dissent	Other Dissent
1810	2	1	2	2
1811	2	1	3	2
1812	2	0	3	1
1813	4	0	2	2

The impetus for the Society had come from dissenters. Anderson wrote an address to the public, and he and Peddie lobbied ministers for support. Anderson was particularly keen to attract the approval of the Established Church and stressed the independence of the proposed Society from the British and Foreign Bible Society, the constitution of which was opposed by many in the Church of Scotland. [72] As the above table shows, the attempt to get ecumenical support was successful despite the formation of the Scottish Bible Society by the Church of Scotland. Hugh Anderson commented that the Edinburgh Bible Society attracted "the good-will of Christians of all denominations ....". [73] In terms of numbers of subscribers, it maintained consistent support.

Numbers of Subscribers to the Edinburgh Bible Society

Year	Subscribers
1810	379
1811	306
1812	373
1813	396

Other Societies also sought to select balanced committees. The committee of the Edinburgh Religious Tract Society of 1813 included one Church of Scotland minister and one Dissenter. In the same year the Auxiliary Missionary Society elected two Dissenters and David Dickson of the Established Kirk as vice-presidents. The Society for Promoting Christianity Among the Jews in 1820 had a committee including four ministers of the Established Church and four Dissenters. The Gratis Sabbath School Society showed little clerical participation on its committees. James Peddie was the only minister in 1814. No ministers participated in 1816. In 1817 Henry Grey of the Established Church is listed as a committee member. His place was taken by David Dickson in 1819 and 1820. Only the Edinburgh Missionary Society had an unbalanced denominational representation on its committee. Although it had started under congregationalist influence in the 1790s, by the mid 1810s ministers of the Established Kirk outnumbered Dissenters by seven to two.

The careful selection of committee members could also encourage cooperation between different Societies. In 1813, four of the Religious Tract Society's sixteen committee members were also on the committee of the Bible Society for the same year. It also shared three other committee members with the Auxiliary Missionary Society. Lists of subscribers to the Religious Tract Society and the Bible Society were available for the period 1812-1813. Both lists were of similar size. Using the principles of nominal record linkage which we have discussed earlier, it was found that 37.6% of Bible Society members could be identified as members of the Religious Tract Society (excluding anonymous and non-Edinburgh subscribers).

However, there is some evidence to suggest that certain

Societies had a greater propensity to cooperate than others. Six out of the sixteen Gratis Sabbath School Society directors of 1814 were on the committee of the Auxiliary Missionary Society of the previous year. In 1816, however, none of its committee members were on the directorate of the Established Church - dominated Edinburgh Missionary Society. The Missionary Society had much closer links with the Bible Society: six of its twenty-two committee members were on the committee of the New Town Auxiliary Bible Society.

The availability of subscription lists and lists of committee members is patchy, making difficult a comprehensive comparison between Societies and across time. However, the general picture is that most Societies selected committee members which reflected and expressed their interdenominational character. Also, cross-membership between Societies was encouraged by 'sharing' of committee members.

Venues: your place or mine?

The venue at which the members of Societies met was another influence on maintaining consensus. A number of the Societies under discussion met at neutral venues which could not be identified with particular religious denominations. The Bible Society held their annual general meeting at the Royal Exchange Coffee House and, later, the social function facilities of Corri's rooms. The Religious Tract Society met in McEwan's Rooms at the Royal Exchange. Such venues could be hired in the name of the whole society rather than a particular church or chapel acting as host.

The Gratis Sabbath School Society used the facilities of another public institution, occupying the Dispensary Hall in Richmond Street. However, by the late 1810s their annual anniversary meetings were

being held in the parish church of St. Andrews.

By contrast, the dissenting impulses of the Edinburgh Missionary Society and the Edinburgh Auxiliary Missionary Society were expressed by meeting in James Peddie's Burgher Chapel in Bristo Street.

The other main type of meeting was the benefit sermon at which a collection would be made on behalf of the Society. It was common for the town council to sanction city-wide collections at churches and chapels for 'public' causes such as poor relief. Voluntary associations used this practice to justify their applications to individual churches for congregational collections. In 1815, for example, the Gratis Sabbath School Society sent a 'memorial' to the Kirk session of St. Cuthbert's urging a church collection. They were hopeful that the 'propriety' of such a collection would be recognised in view of recent city-wide collections on behalf of the Parochial Institutions (i.e. Church of Scotland Sunday-schools). [74]

Thus the members of Kirk sessions or congregations could demonstrate support for a religious Society by approving a benefit sermon at their church. The Societies, for their part, tended to hold benefit sermons at the churches of different denominations in order to demonstrate and advertise the public and interdenominational nature of their institution. Such a policy also served to express the varied religious interests of the membership.

For example, the following table shows the venue of benefit sermons preached on behalf of the Gratis Sabbath School Society. The source of this information is the annual reports which advertised the venues to members in the statement of accounts.

Venues of Benefit Sermons for the Gratis Sabbath School Society, 1816-1820.

St. Andrew's (Established Kirk)	4
St. Cuthbert's (Established Kirk)	4
St. George's (Chapel of Ease)	2
Canongate (Established Kirk)	2
St. Peter's (Chapel of Ease)	1
St. Paul's (Chapel of Ease)	1
Bristol Street Chapel (Burgher)	4
College Street Chapel (Relief)	1

The Bible Society and Religious Tract Society also varied the venues of their sermons. However, the activities of the missionary societies appear to have centred around James Peddie's Burgher Chapel in Bristo Street.

The Structure of the Meeting

The conduct of business at meetings was carefully stage-managed in such a way that the common interest of the members was affirmed and differences were suppressed. The range of matters for debate was specifically limited to the objects of the institution. In the case of the Gratis Sabbath School Society rule number two stated that "religious instruction of youth to be the only subject of discussion at meetings". [75]

Typically, a large proportion of a meeting would involve the moving of the annual report on behalf of the directors. Apart from intimating the extent to which the Society had progressed and giving account of its financial state, much of the report concentrated on reaffirming the objectives of the Society. This ritual restatement of common purposes invariably met unanimous approval. Similarly, the reading of a report from an auxiliary or parent institution was entirely uncontroversial. Any resolutions which were put to the meeting were of a kind which were assured approbation. At the Gratis Sabbath School Society's meeting of 1816, for example, it was

resolved that "individual happiness and national prosperity, depend more on the moral and religious instruction of the young, than on any other agency whatever ...". [76] The following year the meeting 'debated' the motion that "the Edinburgh Gratis Sabbath School Society, and all other similar institutions, are in the present state of Society indispensable, and have a strong claim upon the patronage and aid of every pious and patriotic mind". [77] Typically, other consensual motions included votes of thanks to the directors and others who had aided the Society.

Detailed accounts of meetings are scarce. Annual reports usually only give summarised versions. However, fairly full reports are available for the Edinburgh Bible Society. The following description of a meeting in 1813, lasting over three hours and attended by more than one thousand people, dramatises the controlled consensus of the proceedings. [78]

The apologies of the President, Lord Cathcart, were read. Cathcart as a high status patron gave the Society respectability but rarely attended meetings. George Buchan of Kelloe took the chair. The report was read by James Peddie. It was moved by John Campbell of Carbrook and seconded by the Episcopalian minister Archibald Alison. Votes of thanks were then moved to the auxilliary societies by Dr. Charles Stuart, seconded by Rev. Dr. John Jamieson (Anti-Burgher). Christopher Anderson (Baptist) then read an account of the proceedings of the British and Foreign Bible Society. This was followed by a unanimously approved motion by Rev. Dr. David Johnston of the Established Church that "it is the incumbent duty, as well as the high privilege of this meeting, to exert all its influence, in aiding the funds of that valuable Establishment". George Buchan and

the lawyer George Ross moved thanks to the president. The roll of vice-presidents was then read. The accountant Robert Scott Moncrieff moved thanks to the vice-presidents, seconded by the lawyer George Lyon. The names of the new committee were then read and proposed. These were approved unanimously. The Dissenting ministers Thomas McCrie and Thomas Brown (of Dalkeith) moved thanks to the previous committee. Christopher Anderson read the treasurer's account. A motion of thanks to the treasurer was moved by the lawyer Patrick Tennant and the Dissenter George Payne. David Dickson of the Established Church moved the thanks to the Secretary. At this point John Campbell of Warriston took the chair, while James Peddie thanked George Buchan of Kelloe and asked that he allow his name to go forward as a vice-president. The meeting ended.

Those proceedings have been described at some length because they illustrate a number of important points. Firstly, throughout this lengthy meeting, motions are completely uncontroversial. Secondly, representatives of both the Established and Dissenting churches are visible and audible to the audience and a balance of religious interests is seen to be observed. Thirdly, in a meeting of a Society which we earlier showed to have a wide-ranging middle class membership, attended by over a thousand people, only the professional elite of clerics and lawyers appear to have had sufficient status to take the floor.

In this chapter it has been argued that the typical religious voluntary association of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century projected itself as a public institution rather than a sectarian one. Through the framing of broad objectives, the language of its annual reports, its choice of meeting place and the theatre of

its meeting it was largely successful in achieving a consensus which cut across religious and status divisions. This enabled a cohesiveness of action on matters of broad common interest, particularly relating to the control and influence of the values and behaviour of the working classes at home and the natives of the empire abroad. Moreover, they allowed supporters of Dissenting Churches to have influence in the mainstream of religious matters in the public sphere.

However, the claims on such influence inevitably provoked opposition from elements within the Established Church. We shall now examine this opposition.

The Limits to Concensus

We have seen that there were three main types of religious voluntary associations - those concerned with foreign missions, those distributing Bibles and tracts and those promoting religious instruction. Let us look in turn at the conflicts these activities engendered.

We have seen that missionary Societies had strong Dissenting influences. Although by the mid 1810s there was considerable support for the Edinburgh Missionary Society from Established Kirk ministers, these were largly evangelicals. Missionary Societies encountered fierce opposition from the outset in the 1790s. In 1786 the General Assembly rejected financial support by 58 to 44. One speaker claimed, "their funds may be, in time, nay, certainly will be, turned against the constitution". [79]

The Edinburgh Auxiliary Missionary Society was not capable of attracting wide support in its early years. In its first three years it had donated only £200 to the London Missionary Society. It

attracted more support after 1815 when it began to donate most of its funds to the Scottish (formerly the Edinburgh) Missionary Society. [80]

The activities of the Gratis Sabbath School Society clearly interfered with those of the Church of Scotland which established Parochial sunday-schools in 1812. As the following table shows, the Gratis Sabbath School Society enjoyed considerable success throughout the 1810s.

Schools Founded by the EGSSS, 1810-1820 [81]

Year	Number of Schools	Number of Children	Pupils per School
1810	38	1585	42
1811	37	1540	42
1812	44	2200	50
1813	50	2670	53
1814	55	3170	58
1815	66	4914	74
1816	70	4972	71
1817	72	4900	68
1818	72	5165	72
1819	77	5176	67
1820	81	5112	63

Such activities provided a considerable challenge to the Established Church. The performance of the Gratis Sabbath School Society compares favourably with that of the Parochial Institutions. The Committee for Promoting Local Schools in Edinburgh estimated in 1824 that an average of 50 pupils attended their schools "notwithstanding the favourable auspices under which they were established, and the great annual expense at which they are supported". [82]

The EGSSS, for its part, made a particular point of welcoming the activities of the Parochial Institutions. They argued that the opening of new schools in close proximity to existing ones "tends to improve those already in existence". [83] However there is no

indication that their schools were approved by the parish minister. Brown points out that by the end of our period only 93 out of 452 schools associated with the Scottish Sabbath School Union were conducted or countenanced by the parish minister. [84]

Many of the principles on which the Society was founded were unfavourable to the Established Church. It generally opposed gratuitous education, which, it was argued, was not sufficiently valued and led to a lack of discrimination in accepting pupils into schools. [85] The Society was also 'indiscriminate' in that it gave considerable authority to laymen in its affairs. The Society argued that the only qualification to be a teacher is that they should be disciples of Christ. [86] Although the Society gave general advice to teachers, they clearly had considerable autonomy in the way they conducted classes. Visitors inspected schools, but these were also laymen chosen at the General Meeting. Indeed, the Society argued that regular schools were not the only mode of teaching, laying emphasis on private instruction.

It was also clear that the religious tone of the Society might have engendered opposition. Rule fourteen of the Society stated that teachers shall impress the minds of children with the leading and most important doctrines of the scriptures. [87] The first two doctrines mentioned were the fallen state of man and his utter inability to save himself. This bleak evangelical emphasis would find little sympathy with the moderate elite of the Established Church.

Open hostility to the Society never publicly surfaced, due in part to its powerful ideology of Christian unity. Nevertheless, the Society clearly competed with the Parochial sunday-schools rather

than attempt to cooperate with them. Their schools always had a precarious existence. The 1817 annual report, for example, alluded to the closure of four schools. One of these was due to the 'removal' of the teacher, another by the "appropriation of the room to other purposes", and a further two closed because of falling rolls caused by the opening of other schools in the vicinity. [88] That year they reported 630 fewer scholars (a claim somewhat at variance with their own statistics) due to the transference of some pupils to the Parochial sunday-schools.

This type of division between Established Church and interdenominational voluntary associations was mirrored in the sphere of Bible distribution. The Edinburgh Bible Society drew opposition from those "... who dreaded the union for any object, however good, of men so opposite in their opinions respecting the meaning of the Book they had agreed to circulate". [89] The Scottish Bible Society was established by ministers of the Church of Scotland as a rival institution at the same time. The Edinburgh Bible Society wished them well. It informed the public that it was to have been wished the two Societies could unite their efforts but (maintaining the diplomatic conventions of the annual report) "that was prevented by circumstances which it is unnecessary to particularise". [90]

The "circumstances" may be surmised. We have noted earlier the opposition of some in the Church of Scotland to the constitution of the British and Foreign Bible Society. Also, the presence of J.A. Haldane on the EBS committee may have made cooperation difficult for some in the Established Kirk. Haldane was a fierce critic of the Church of Scotland. The Church could also have objected to lay participation in clerical matters. The Society's policy of

distributing the authorised version of the Bible without note or comment may have concerned some that the poor were not being given sufficient pastoral guidance in interpreting the scriptures.

The issue of clerical authority caused division within the Edinburgh Bible Society itself. In 1812 the Rev. Thomas Brown moved at the annual meeting "That every Clergyman or Dissenting Minister, who is a member of the Society, shall be entitled to attend and vote at all meetings of the committee". The motion undermined the principle of subscriber democracy, claiming power for Ministers ex officio. The motion was carried but it was a rare occasion when the unanimity of the meeting was not achieved.

Conclusions

Religious voluntary associations achieved considerable cohesiveness of action by disclaiming sectarian loyalties and appealing to broad identities which were effectively evocative for a wide cross-section of the middle class. The interests which such Societies expressed were commonly class specific. They included a paternalistic moral guidance of the labouring classes as an antidote to urban disorder. This was often linked to a desire for commercial prosperity which was thought to follow from moral regeneration.

As was seen in the previous chapter, the expression of such interests involved the definition of new 'pastoral' roles in the community for wider sections of the middle class. The break-up of the parochial system of religious instruction and guidance necessitated the development of these new roles and provided adherents of Dissenting congregations avenues of public influence.

Dissenters often provided the impetus for the formation of religious voluntary associations. The language and tone of such

organisations was often Evangelical, as was the willingness to support lay participation in clerical affairs. The enthusiasm for the spread of literacy and the 'indiscriminate' admittance of pupils to sabbath schools met with some opposition in the Established Church.

However, religious disputes on such matters were less disruptive than in England. In the leadership structures of religious voluntary associations there was often substantial support from the Established Church, and from its Evangelical wing in particular. Moreover, the formality and 'propriety' of annual general meetings and the openness of published reports did much to mitigate the hostility and suspicion felt towards interdenominational Societies. Indeed, the Established Church found it difficult to oppose the principle of Christian unity without appearing narrowly sectarian.

Opposition, however, was present as the formation of the Scottish Bible Society demonstrated. Nevertheless a broad Evangelical-Dissenting front was successful in appealing for support in ways which transcended parochial boundaries or sectarian loyalties. Indeed the Scottish Bible Society and all religious institutions tended to compete for public support on that basis and thus contributed to the legitimation of the voluntary association by replicating its cultural and organisational form.

This formation of cohesive organisations for expressing broad interests and the development of institutional mechanisms for minimising potential sources of division was an important contribution to the formation of the middle class as a collective, self-aware social force.

ENDNOTES

1. We shall see that many Societies sought to spread axiomatic Christian beliefs and consciously avoided divisive doctrinal issues.

2. Thomas Chalmers, The Influence of Bible Societies on the Temporal Necessities of the Poor, Edinburgh, 1814, p.22.

3. Callum G. Brown, 'Religion and social change', in T.M. Devine and Rosalind Mitchison (eds.), People and Society in Scotland, vol. 1, 1760-1830, p.151.

4. John Seed, 'Unitarianism, political economy and the antinomies of liberal culture in Manchester, 1830-50', Social History, VII, January 1982.

5. Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall, Family Fortunes: men and women of the English middle class, 1780-1850, London, 1987; A.A. McLaren, Religion and Social Class: the disruption years in Aberdeen, London, 1974; Charles W.J. Withers, 'Kirk, Club and culture change: Gaelic chapels, Highland societies and the urban Gaelic subculture in eighteenth century Scotland, Social History, 10, no. 2, May 1985, pp.171-192, have influenced the adoption of this approach.

6. Callum G. Brown, The Social History of Religion in Scotland since 1730, London, 1987.

7. From 1798 chapels of ease had to be recognised by the General Assembly. They had no kirk session of their own and their congregations were subject to the kirk session of the parish.

8. A.L. Drummond and J. Bulloch, The Scottish Church, 1688-1843: the Age of the Moderates, Edinburgh, St. Andrew's Press, 1973.

9. Brown, 'Religion and social change', op.cit., p.147.

10. Richard Sher and Alexander Murdoch, 'Patronage and Party in the Church of Scotland, 1750-1880', in Norman MacDougall (ed.), Church, Policy and Society: Scotland 1408-1929, Edinburgh, John Donald, 1983.

11. W. McKelvie, Annals and Statistics of the United Presbyterian Church, Edinburgh, 1873.

12. J. Stark, The Picture of Edinburgh, Edinburgh, 1819.
The Relief Church had split from the Original Secession Church in 1752. It had itself split into congregations known as Burghers and Anti-Burghers. In the 1790s the Burghers and Anti-Burghers split into so-called Auld Lichts and New Lichts over the right of a civil magistrate to dictate a religious creed.

13. W.L. Mathieson, Church and Reform in Scotland, a history from 1797 to 1843, Glasgow, 1916.

14. A.A. McLaren, Religion and Social Class, op.cit.

15. Quoted in Drummond and Bulloch, The Scottish Church, op.cit., pp.145-6.

16. John Parker Lawson, History of the Scottish Episcopal Church, Edinburgh, 1843, p.336.

17. Remains of the late Rt. Rev. Daniel Sandford, 2 vols., Edinburgh, 1830, p.26.

18. A.J. Youngson, The Making of Classical Edinburgh, p.192.

19. A.L. Drummond and J. Bulloch, The Scottish Church, 1688-1843, op.cit., p.153.

20. Harry Escott, A History of Scottish Congregationalism, Edinburgh, (s.d.).

21. George Yuille (ed.), History of the Baptists in Scotland, Glasgow, (s.d.).

22. Ibid., p.121.

23. Ibid., p.123.

24. Hugh Anderson, The Life and Letters of Christopher Anderson, Edinburgh, 1854.

25. Ibid.

26. A. Skervington Wood, 'Methodism in Scotland', in R. Davies (et.al.) eds., History of the Methodist Church in Great Britain, vol. 3, London, Epworth Press, 1983, pp.265-278.

27. A.J. Hayes and D.A. Cowland (eds.), Scottish Methodism in the Early Victorian Period: the Scottish correspondence of the Rev. Jabez Bunting, 1800-57, Edinburgh, 1981.

28. Alan J. Hayes, Nicolson Square Methodist Church, 1816-1976, [Edinburgh, 1976] and Alan J. Hayes, Edinburgh Methodism 1761-1975: the Mother Churches, [Edinburgh, 1976]. Both these works were published privately.

29. J. Stark, The Picture of Edinburgh, op.cit.

30. Earl Morse Wilbur, A History of Unitarianism in Transylvania, England and America, Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press, 1952, p.321.

31. Robert Forsyth, The Beauties of Scotland, op.cit., p.36.

32. Callum Brown, 'The Sunday School Movement in Scotland, 1780-1914', Records of the Scottish Church History Society, vol. xxi (1981-3), pp.3-26.

33. A Summary Account of the Society in Scotland for Promoting Religious Knowledge Among the Poor, Edinburgh [1788?], p.1.

34. Ibid., p.1.

35. Report of the Society in Scotland for Promoting Religious Knowledge Among the Poor, 1815.

36. Laing MSS La. 11 500, Circular of the Edinburgh Missionary Society, 1796.

37. Report of the Edinburgh Religious Tract Society, February, 1813.

38. The Instruction of the Rising Generation in the Principles of the Christian Religion, to which is added an account of the Edinburgh Gratis Sabbath School Society containing the object, plan and rules of that institution, Edinburgh, 1812.

39. Ibid.

40. Ibid.

41. Edinburgh Gratis Sabbath School Society, Report, 1814.

42. First Report of the Edinburgh Bible Society, 1810.

43. Rules of the Edinburgh Auxiliary Missionary Society, 1813.

44. 11th Annual Report of the Edinburgh Auxiliary Missionary Society, 1824, p.4.

45. Scottish Missionary Register, vol. 111, March, 1820, pp.76-80.

46. Edinburgh Society for the Promotion of Christianity Among the Jews, Address, 1820.

47. John Wood, Account of the Edinburgh Sessional School and the other Parochial Institutions for Education established in 1812, Edinburgh, 1829.

48. Eleventh Annual Report of the Sabbath School Union for Scotland, 1827, Laws.

49. Alan J. Hayes, Edinburgh Methodism 1761 - 1975: the mother churches, Edinburgh, 1976, p.217.

50. We have here treated female subscribers as a separate category, although in practice their names would not usually be uniquely identified in the Post Office Directories. We were essentially using courtesy titles (such as 'Mrs' or 'Lady') rather than occupational data to create this category. In a later chapter, where information about members within and between Societies will be cross-tabulated, the 'female' category will not be used. The deviation from methodological purity here is justified on the grounds that in this discussion of class cohesion, gender division is a relevant category of analysis.

51. Caledonian Mercury, September, 1812.

52. Caledonian Mercury, December, 1812.

53. Edinburgh Bible Society, Fourth Annual Report, 1813.

54. Thomas Chalmers, The Christian and Civic Economy of Large Towns, Edinburgh, 1821, p.27.

55. Thomas Chalmers, The Influence of Bible Societies on the Temporal Necessities of the Poor, Edinburgh, 1814, p.20.

56. Report of the Edinburgh Religious Tract Society, 1813.

57. The Instruction of the Rising Generation, op.cit.

58. First Annual Report of the Edinburgh Bible Society, 1810, Laws.

59. Rules of the Edinburgh Auxiliary Missionary Society ....., 1813, p.2.

60. Ibid., p.8.

61. Ibid., p.8.

62. Instruction of the Rising Generation ..., op.cit., p.6.

63. Ibid., p.6.

64. Ibid., p.8.

65. Ibid., p.8.

66. First Report of the Edinburgh Bible Society, 1810, p.15.

67. Scottish Missionary Register, vol. II (Jan. 1821), p.5.

68. Ibid., p.7.

69. Rules of the Edinburgh Auxilliary Missionary Society, 1813, p.14.

70. The Instruction of the Rising Generation ..., op.cit., p.18.

71. Ibid., pp.13-18.

72. Hugh Anderson, The Life and Letters of Christopher Anderson, Edinburgh, 1854, pp.120-126.

73. Ibid., p.122.

74. Report of the Gratis Sabbath School Society, 1816, p.26.

75. The Instruction of the Rising Generation ..., op. cit.

76. Annual Report of the Gratis Sabbath School Society, 1816, p.5.

77. Annual Report of the Gratis Sabbath School Society, 1817, p.4.

78. Fourth Annual Report of the Edinburgh Bible Society, Edinburgh, Aikman, 1813. (The edition published by Andrew Balfour does not contain a detailed account of the meeting).

79. Callum G. Brown, 'The Sunday-School Movement in Scotland, 1780-1914', op.cit., p.9.

80. Eleventh Annual Report of the Edinburgh Auxilliary Missionary Society, 1824.

81. Except for 1810 and 1811, where information was taken from the Caledonian Mercury, July 23rd, 1812, the source for these details is the annual reports. Where annual reports were not available in particular years (1813, 1815, 1818) it was possible to get the relevent data from the report of the following year. We should note that the Society's schools were country-wide.

82. Committee for Promoting Local Schools in Edinburgh, Report, 1824, p.6.

83. Annual Report, 1814, p.10.

84. Callum G. Brown, 'The Sunday-School Movement in Scotland', op.cit., p.12.

85. John Wood, Account of the Edinburgh Sessional School and the other Parochial Institutions for Education established in 1812, 1829.

86. The Instruction of the Rising Generation, op.cit., p.12.

87. Ibid.

88. Annual Report, 1817, p.8.

89. Hugh Anderson, The Life and Letters of Christopher Anderson, op.cit., p.122.

90. First Annual Report of the Edinburgh Bible Society, 1810, p.7.

CHAPTER SIX

EDUCATIONAL VOLUNTARY ASSOCIATIONS

"I am far from being friendly", pursued Mr. Dombey, "to what is called, by persons of levelling sentiments, general education. But it is necessary that the inferior classes should continue to be taught to know their position, and to conduct themselves properly. So far I approve of schools".

Charles Dickens, Dombey and Son.

Introduction

In the previous chapter we saw the emergence of urban-based, middle class organisations which claimed the right to act publicly in religious affairs. We shall now examine the creation and development of a similar cultural form in institutions primarily concerned with the education of the lower orders.

Our starting point is 1810. In that year four voluntary associations with educational purposes were founded in Edinburgh. These were the Institution for the Education of Deaf and Dumb Children (IEDD), the Lancastrian School Society (LSS), the Society for the Support of Gaelic Schools (GSS) and the Edinburgh Institute (EI). In 1814 there was the formation of the Edinburgh Society for Promoting the Education of the Poor in Ireland (SPEPI). At the end of the decade, ladies of Leith Walk, Greenside and Broughton districts in Edinburgh formed the Female Education Society.

By the second decade of the nineteenth century there was a large degree of consensus among the Scottish elite as to the benefits of a widely diffused basic education. Adam Smith, for example, had been influential in his expression of the idea that an educated population could rationally judge the conduct of government and was less likely to be misled by factious and seditious demagogues. In his Wealth of Nations he wrote, "The more they are instructed the less liable they are to the delusions of enthusiasms and superstition, which, among ignorant nations, frequently occasion the most dreadful disorders". [1]

However, supporters of education were anxious to reassure potential supporters that a widely diffused educational system would not lead to egalitarian aspirations and social conflict. Thus the

Rev. David Dickson wrote that "... it would certainly be worse than absurd to give every man, without respect to his station in society, the same means and extent of education, which might fit him for shining in the paths of literature, or ruling in the councils of a Kingdom. The foundations of endless rivalry being thus deeply laid, almost every bond of social order would speedily be dissolved ...". [2] It was argued that children should be taught subjects suitable to their future stations in life. Indeed, the function of the educational system was the preservation of orders, ranks and degrees.

This belief that the diffusion of knowledge was conducive to political stability was reflected in the extensive network of schools in Scotland in the early nineteenth century. These consisted of parochial and burgh schools funded and controlled by heritors and magistrates, schools supported by gifts and bequests, subscription schools set up under trusts, schools supported by the SSPCK and the fee-paying private or 'adventure' schools. Although the optimistic view of Scots literacy, expressed, for example, by L.J. Saunders has recently been tempered, the Scottish education system in the late eighteeth century was ideologically and institutionally better established than its counterpart in England. [3]

However, a number of social developments were straining the system and causing anxiety among the emerging middle class about the effectiveness and comprehensiveness of schooling for the lower orders. These concerns form the context for the educational initiatives in Edinburgh in the 1810s.

The parochial system of schools was unable to cope with the large increases in population which we noted in Chapter Two. According to Withrington's analysis of the returns to the House of

Common Select Committee on the Education of the Poor in 1818, 46.67% of schools in Fife and the Lothians were private, compared with 42.90% which were publicly funded. [4] In 1811, the Lancastrian School Society declared that, "the want of proper schools for education of the lower classes of the community has long been felt in Edinburgh and its suburbs, there being no public provision for the purpose that is in any way adequate to the attainment of it". [5] Similarly, in relation to the provision of education in the Highlands, the Society for the Support of Gaelic Schools argued that parish and SPCK schools "are wholly inadequate to the necessities of large districts of the country, where many thousands are perishing for lack of knowledge". [6] The GSS argued that the SPCK was stretched to the limit of their resources in managing their 290 schools in 1810.

However, voluntary associations in the 1810s defined the problem of education not just in terms of numbers, but in terms of the kind of society which they saw developing. The Lancastrian School Society directors were anxious about the inherent dangers of urbanisation. They thought the poor in the city were less zealous in the education of their children than those in the country. The moral conduct of urban youth was the worst because they are "most exposed to the contagion of bad example". [7] Education was seen as an antidote to the moral dangers of the city. In the case of the Edinburgh Institute, which provided 'popular' lectures on science and literature to "persons engaged in business", the aim was to provide "rational and elegant relaxation" in contrast to the indulgent hedonism of many urban leisure pursuits. The promoters claimed that "few public amusements are to be found equally unexceptionable,

either in respect of morality or economy". [8]

Moreover, the intensification of capitalist forms of production was perceived to be producing attitudes and relationships which were inimical to the interests of the middle class and increasingly outside their control. In a sermon preached on behalf of the Lancastrian School Society, the Episcopalian bishop Daniel Sandford gave his audience a lesson in political economy and moral philosophy. The lower orders, he argued, were locked into an economic situation that forces them to sell their labour to survive: "The necessities of their condition require them, as soon as their bodily strength is equal to it, to earn their daily bread", and this "occupies all their thoughts and exertions". [9] Although he considered regular habits of industry to be productive of moral and economic good, the exigencies of wage labour left the minds of the working class uncultivated. Sandford recognised that it was in the nature of wage relationships to provide license to workers at times when they were not at work. During the recurring intervals of his release from employment the uneducated, 'uncultivated' labourer would inevitably be driven to resorts of low intemperence and idle meetings of disorderly amusement. These meetings were "high aggravated in great towns". [10]

The problem was one of control. Who was to cultivate the minds of the working classes in a commercialising society where economic relationships were taking precedence over paternalistic supervision? Modern society was thought to be producing a dearth of persons in supervisory roles. The LSS argued that parochial educational establishments "are beginning to suffer from the change of the times, and particularly from the influence of commerce and manufactures".

[11] The financial rewards of commerce and the low social status of school masters was believed to be luring well qualified, respectable persons away from teaching.

The voluntary associations of the 1810s were useful media for reasserting the traditional role of the wealthy in cultivating the values and behaviour of the poor. Given the strains on the educational system, the town rather than the parish was the typical level of organisation. In such institutions the aims of education were projected as being in the interests of the whole 'community' and the participation of the 'public' was sought. Education was not only the responsibility of the Church, the magistrates or the appointed trustees of the charitable endowment.

The mobilisation of middle class support for educational ventures gained particular urgency in the context of the increase in affordable and readable printed literature for the working classes in this period. A survey from the initial phase of the British Library's Nineteenth-Century Short Title Catalogue indicated that the number of titles published annually in Scotland increased from 265 in 1801 to 565 in 1815. [12] We noted (in a different context) in Chapter Two that the number of printing houses increased in Edinburgh from 21 in 1790 to 47 in 1819. [13] Whereas the spread of radical publications such as Tom Paine's Rights of Man was perceived as threatening by the bourgeoisie, the diffusion of the moral tales contained in Rev. Henry Duncan's Scotch Cheap Repository (started in 1807) or the translation of the scriptures into Gaelic under the patronage of the SPCK in 1810 provided the opportunity to impart the "spirit of piety, decency, order, industrious habits, good sense and reflection" which Bishop Sandford believed contributed so

considerably to national prosperity. [14] Voluntary associations functioned to filter appropriate reading material to the lower orders and vet those who disseminated it. They popularised the notion that education would support rather than undermine political stability. As the Society for Promoting the Education of the Poor in Ireland stated, "the communication of the blessings of education to the lower classes, is the most likely means of lessening political animosities, of rescuing the ignorant from the perverting influence of factious demagogues, and of leading men of all orders both to appreciate rightly the benefits of a free constitution, and to be willing to make those sacrifices which are necessary for its stability". [15]

In this chapter we shall be exploring the social significance of a specific form of response to the problematic of educating the working classes in the context of population expansion, urbanisation, commercialisation and potential instability. In the 1810s the voluntary association emerged in persistent cultural patterns as a mechanism for resourcing and controlling the education of a range of social groups. Although, in terms of schools and scholars this type of institution remained numerically in a minority, its significance goes somewhat wider.

Educational voluntary associations appealed to a variety of types of identity such as the patriot, the citizen, the benevolent, the wealthy, the influential and the civilsed. They defined their interests as congruent with social order and economic prosperity. The mediation and collective response to those identities and interests contributed, to some extent, to the formation of a middle class consciousness.

However, as we argued in the previous chapter, such associations

were both expressive of and provided foci for divisions within the middle class. Firstly, at one level, voluntary organisations for education claimed public legitimacy for acting in a sphere which was traditionally the responsibility of the Church, the local state, heritors or private individuals. We need to examine the relationship between voluntary associations and the established institutions of power. Secondly, access to power within these voluntary associations was highly regulated. It was institutionalised in the form of committees of directors and 'extraordinary directors', governors, patrons, school visitors, presidents and vice-presidents. Access to such positions was heavily dependent on high status and wealth (the contribution of a specified amount of money). An examination of the leadership structures and the social composition of office bearers was likely to reveal much about the role of the bourgeois elite in educational voluntary associations and the nature of their relationship with the bulk of the middle class. Finally, religious and Party political differences limited the cohesiveness of the middle class response to the problematic of education. The case of the Lancastrian School Society, which in England was closely associated with non-conformist interests and opposed by the Anglican Church and Tory Party, is a particularly poignant illustration of this theme.

Aims and Objectives of Educational Voluntary Associations

For the sake of clarity we shall briefly describe the primary aims and objectives of the Societies under discussion. We shall do so largely in the terms in which the Societies themselves addressed their constituencies of support.

The Institution for the Education of Deaf and Dumb Children was

founded in 1810. The General Meeting of the Society in February, 1815 agreed to publish a report of their proceedings in order that their objects would become generally known. The meeting thus became a public platform. The objects were stated as being, "to remedy one of the most calamitous and affecting imperfections, to which human nature is liable; to withdraw that veil, by which many of the finest minds, and the most powerful understandings, have been rendered inaccessible to the lights of truth and reason, and to the blessed light of religion; to restore these interesting objects to all the enjoyments and all the usefulness of social intercourse, and to open to their view those higher anticipations of happiness, which are not destined to receive their completion in this state of existence". [16]

The deaf and dumb were considered to be closed off from moral and religious truths. Giving children moral enlightenment and spiritual salvation was the main emphasis in this statement of objectives. In 1818, eight of the twenty ordinary directors of the institution were ministers. [17]

The reference to the "usefulness of social intercourse" also hints at the objectives of political economy and social order. Pupils were taught reading, writing, arithmetic "and such other branches of education as may fit them for the stations to which they are destined". [18] In a different tone which put the emphasis on the habituation to useful labour, potential supporters were informed that "the pupils who belong to the lower classes of society, are trained to those habits which are to make them useful in their stations". [19] Gendered divisions were also present in the form of education provided. Female pupils were taught sewing and other

'peculiar' branches of female education. However, female pupils of 'inferior stations' were taught occupations which would enable them to be placed in domestic service.

Thus, the Society emphasised religion and political economy in providing education for children. The average age of children was twelve. Most children boarded at the institution, although some lodged with their parents. They came from a variety of social backgrounds. Some were able to pay the £20 considered necessary to fund board and instruction. Others were subsidised by the institution or had their fees paid by a patron. From 1814, the cost of board was much more likely to be met by the institution. Although some pupils were given a certain level of institutionalised care, specialist medical diagnoses and treatment of the deaf and dumb were not greatly emphasised as objects of the Society. Although the post of physician was specifically part of the committee, it remained unclear from annual reports what his role was supposed to be. Only two doctors were on the committee of 1815. Of those members subscribing between 1814 and 1815 only nine out of one hundred and eighty were medically qualified.

In the same year as the foundation of the IEDD, Christopher Anderson, the Dissenting minister who was influential in instituting the Edinburgh Bible Society, began to canvass for a Society to support the teaching of Gaelic in the Highlands. [20] In December, 1810 a circular letter was sent by the promoters of such a plan to their 'friends' in Edinburgh and the vicinity, inviting them to a public meeting in the Royal Exchange Coffee House. [21] At the meeting the Rev. David Johnston (of North Leith parish church) was chosen president and a committee of twenty-four was appointed to draw

up a report on the state of education in the Highlands and Islands. This committee's report was delivered at a meeting in January, 1811 at which it was unanimously resolved that "this meeting do now erect itself into a Society .... to be denominated "The Society for the Support of Gaelic Schools", and that the only object of the Society shall be to teach the inhabitants to read the Holy Scriptures in their native language". [22] A committee was appointed to draw up regulations and a scheme of management. Those regulations restated the object of the Society. The Society considered the institution of circulating schools to be the best method of allocating educational resources to a sparsely populated part of the country. The school regulations indicated that they were to continue for six to eighteen months in any one place. When the teacher moved on, it was hoped a local person would carry on his work. The emphasis was on the education of children, although adult sabbath or evening schools might be established in conjunction with the children's circulating school.

The aims of education for the GSS were specifically limited. Teaching children to read was the means of conveying religious knowledge. The elementary teaching materials of the circulating schools were a Gaelic spelling book and a Gaelic psalm book (to be succeeded by the Bible). Evangelical and Dissenting ministers dominated the personnel of committees and spoke most frequently at Annual General Meetings.

The aim of the Society was not to educate per se, but to influence what children might read. The 3rd Annual report declares that the committee "were employed in conveying the knowledge of Divine Truth to a people, before their language had teemed with such

books, as are fitted only to corrupt and debase the human heart ... long before it is possible for our Highland youth even to see any permicious publications in their own tongue, we hope they will be armed against its influence, from having read and revered the sacred scriptures". [23]

In Edinburgh in October, 1810, a number of 'respectable gentlemen' formed themselves into the Edinburgh Lancastrian School Society. The first regulation of the Society stated that "The object of this Society shall be to facilitate the acquisition of the invaluable blessing of a good education, by establishing and supporting one or more schools, as may be found necessary, upon the plan practised by Mr. Joseph Lancaster". [24] Lancaster, a Quaker, had advocated the establishment of schools which taught an undenominational form of Christianity and a largely secular curriculum of reading, writing and arithmetic. [25] The Edinburgh LSS adopted the general features of Lancaster's monitorial system of schooling but introduced modifications, notably the teaching of the authorised catechism of the Established Church under parental approval.

After initially hiring temporary accommodation, the Society raised loans and subscriptions to build a purpose-built school house to accommodate 400 pupils. The school was opened in 1811. Two years later funds were raised to build a second school house on two floors which would include separate facilities for the education of girls and boys. A separate female school was also built. Pupils were expected to pay a quarterly fee of two shillings and sixpence, although fees might be paid by the Society in exceptional cases. [26] The school catchment area was city-wide rather than parochial.

Once again, the wider aim of the Society was to provide an institutional framework to produce certain kinds of social relationships. The children of the lower orders "should be taught and formed to useful habits", rather than become "disorderly and mischievous". [27] However this was not a matter of crude domination. The aim was to reassert the traditional eighteenth-century idea of paternalism which involved a dialectical relationship between rich and poor. The Episcopalian bishop Daniel Sandford, in a benefit sermon for the LSS, said: "Such may be the happy consequences of an institution, which by placing the children of one order of society more particularly under the guardianship and protection of the rest, may unite together the various classes of the community, by the bonds of kindness on the one part and gratitude on the other; may teach the rich and great to feel an interest in the comfort and well-being of their less abounding brethren; and the poor to look up with affection to their superiors, without envying them the possession of advantages which are employed to such purposes of benevolence". [28]

However, not all educational voluntary associations were concerned with the education of the poor. The Edinburgh Institute (1810) was formed to provide popular lectures on science and literature "to persons engaged in business, who may be prevented from their professional avocations from attending a regular course of academic education". [29] The Institute was a precursor to the Edinburgh School of Arts formed in 1821 to give lectures in the principles of chemistry and mechanical philosophy to working tradesmen.

The promoters claimed that the success of the Edinburgh Institute would bring extensive benefits to society at large, "by

diffusing the principles of science among men of business, in whose hands they may lead to the most valuable improvements". [30] This concern with the diffusion of scientific knowledge was reflected in the balance of the subject matter of lectures. In the first session 54 chemistry lectures and 24 on astronomy compared with nine on belles-lettres and six on elocution. In the 1811-12 session the courses offered included 32 lectures on natural philosophy, seven on electricity, seven on meteorology, ten on history and seven on oratory.

Admittance to a course of lectures depended on paying an annual contribution. This had originally been 10/6d., but as the Society strove for greater respectability and profitability it was increased to one guinea. However, the invitation of guests to lectures made them public occasions; the intention was to provide "rational and elegant relaxation". The activities of the Society were intended as a model for proper public conduct. Whereas 'elegant' connoted gentlemanly behaviour, the 'rational' element of leisure pursuits was in contrast to the indulgent hedonism of many elite clubs given over to sensual pleasures. The promoters advertised that audiences of up to 500 attended lectures without any "irregularity" taking place.

By 1814 there are indications that the scientific academic lecture was being supplemented by practical demonstrations by the "men of business" themselves. In March of that year the Edinburgh printer John Ruthven exhibited a new printing press, and in April the watchmaker Robert Brysson demonstrated an improved pendulum. [31]

After this flurry of voluntary activity in 1810, the next major educational initiative was the opening of the Edinburgh Sessional School in Leith Wynd on April 29th, 1813. This school was annexed to

the parochial institutions for religious education which had been set up by the Established Church in 1812. The effectiveness of the parochial institutions had been impeded by illiteracy. Teachers had reported that around 300 pupils attending the schools (excluding St. Cuthberts and the Canongate) could not read. [32] Although subscriptions were received for the Sessional School by the banker Alexander Kinnear and the Rev. Dr. Brunton, this was a church-based rather than a voluntary organisation. The institutions of the church, rather than the individual members, controlled school regulations and pupil intake. Five children from each Kirk session were to be admitted gratis and ten children from each session had a preferable right of admission on payment of a fee of 6d. per month. Children were instructed in reading and writing under the monitorial system of teaching. After a year of operation the number of pupils attending the school was 250. [33]

In 1814 the Edinburgh Society for Promoting the Education of the Poor in Ireland was founded. The Society sought to mobilise support around the general principle of universal education and the political and social stability that was thought to arise from it. In their first annual report the directors declared confidently that "... it is most desirable that education be extended to every member of the community". [34] We noted earlier in the chapter how this Society argued, in terms reminiscent of Adam Smith, that a politically stable Society depended on the rational consent of the enlightened.

The notion of education as an antidote to political extremism gained particular pertinancy when applied to Ireland. It was argued that schools not under government control "are often taught by persons destitute of the necessary qualifications for their office,

and not infrequently converted, by means of the immoral books read in them, into seminaries of vice, and sources of corruption". [35] The Society aimed to support the installation of properly qualified teachers and provide approved school texts in order to subdue 'religious zeal' and 'superstition' (euphemisms for Catholicism) and political radicalism. It sought to unite the children of Catholics and Protestants and train them "in habits of subordination, obedience and industry." [36]

Financially incapable of erecting its own schools in Ireland and aware of the potential conflicts involved in a Protestant organisation seeking influence in the education of Catholics, the SPEPI established links and acted as an auxilliary to Societies in the field such as the Hibernian Society (instituted in London in 1806), the Dublin Society for promoting the Education of the Poor in Ireland (established in 1811) and the Hibernian Sunday-School Society (founded in Dublin in 1809).

Interests and Identities

These various aims and objectives were directed towards serving specific interests and generated support by appealing to particular types of social identities. Although Daniel Sandford acknowledged that educational charities were not inconsistent with altruistic feelings, he emphasised that the motives to such activities "are addressed to our self-love, and encourage us to pursue our self-interest ...". [37] What were those interests and to whom were they addressed?

Firstly, in most Societies the 'objects' of charity were the ignorant lower orders. There was an assumption that their benefactors were not of this class. As with other voluntary

associations of the period, to have an interest 'in' the welfare of the lower orders (not 'with' them) implied a prior sense of detachment and social separation. The SPEPI appealed to "the wise and the good" and to men of "respectability and intelligence". [38] Those who had enjoyed the 'blessings' of education had the benevolence and social esteem to enlighten the ignorant. In the Gaelic School Society facts about lack of schooling in the Highlands were presumed to impress those "who duly appreciate the value of education, and who seriously reflect how much of **our** individual, **our** domestic and civil comfort is owing to **our** acquaintance with the use of letters". [39]

This sense of differential social experiences provided fertile ground for the popular development of ideas about the moral dangers of ignorance. Such ideas rested on class-based assumptions that the lower orders were most prone to moral corruption if their minds were uncultivated by education. Sandford argued that those "in the most fortunate situations of human life" had the opportunity to ameliorate the inherent tendency to moral evil even if they lacked education in early life. [40] Their social position enabled them to have time for reflection, they could be influenced by the good standards of behaviour of others in their class, and their requirements for professional advancement were a moderating influence. Such advantages were not available to the lower orders, thus increasing the necessity to "sow the seed" of education in their minds at an early age.

The 'higher orders' were defined as the "natural guardians" of the poor, whose "office" it was to protect them from becoming the victims of ignorance and wickedness. [41] The neglect of this office

would lose the lower orders from the habits of industry and order upon which the prosperity and stability of the community depended. The threat of social disorder was made more poignant by actual events. In a benefit sermon for the LSS, Sir Henry Moncrieff-Wellwood alluded to the Tron riot, saying, "In the investigation of the atrocities which have so lately disturbed the peace of this city, some of the miserable creatures who appear to have been concerned with them, have been found incapable to read and write. Can I say anything better calculated to awaken your beneficence to your native city, on such an occasion as this". [42] Although the prevention of disorder was projected in LSS reports as being of 'universal' interest, it is clear that the assumed links between ignorance and social behaviour were class-biased.

Moreover, the habituation of a well-ordered and industrious workforce was clearly in the specific economic interests of the middle class. As we saw in the case of the Society for Suppression of Begging, voluntary associations were careful not to alienate business interests by disrupting the supply of labour. In the Gaelic Schools, school terms were organised around the needs of the agricultural economy. Classes took place between November and April and June to September, leaving children available to work at seed-time and harvest. In the Deaf and Dumb Institute the age limit for children was fourteen. Three years was considered a suitable period for pupils to complete their education, before being returned to the labour market. In 1815, for example, it was reported by the Society that Robert Rutherford had not been allowed to remain at the institute, "his parents being desirous to get him home that he might attend a trade". [43]

However, the interests of employers were defined as congruent with the interests of the whole community. The LSS argued that their pupils "are brought under a kind of moral process, of which the result will naturally be to increase their fitness for discharging the duties of the different stations which they may afterwards fill: stations in respect of which their superiors may be eventually dependent on their exertions and fidelity". This adding to "the stock of useful talent" and "the capacity of useful service" was advantagous to the "whole community". [44]

In most of the educational Societies under discussion, however, a major component of the representation of their interests was the appeal to Scottish national identity. Rather more than in religious voluntary associations where the constitutional legitimacy of the Established Church may have inhibited such claims, educational charities argued that their progress was connected to the interests of national improvement and prosperity.

The Society for the Support of Gaelic Schools sought to remind "grateful Lowlanders" of their responsibilities towards their countrymen in the Highlands and Islands. The meeting of the Society in Edinburgh on January 16th, 1811 resolved "That the inhabitants of the more highly favoured parts of this country are bound, both by considerations of patriotism and religion, to exert themselves for ameliorating the temporal and spiritual condition of these highly interesting, but hitherto neglected parts of their native country". [45] Bringing reports from remote 'stations' in the north to the metropolitan cultural elite, the Society had something of the character of a missionary project - an analogy not infrequently drawn by contemporaries. The GSS received donations from Bible and

Missionary Societies throughout Scotland as well as from its own auxiliaries in Glasgow and Aberdeen. Individual subscribers remained overwhelmingly from Edinburgh, but contributions were also received from elsewhere in the 'lowlands' (mostly East Lothian, Glasgow and Stirling) and from England (mostly from London, Liverpool and York). Very few individual subscribers came from the Highlands and Islands. The Society also received contributions from abroad.

Source of Individual Subscriptions and Donations to the GSS [46]

	1813	1814	1815	1816	1817
Edinburgh	115	103	105	106	112
Lowlands	112	37	67	88	75
England	45	20	25	7	18
Highlands	5	1	7	15	14
Unknown	17	17	25	36	15

Thus the GSS mobilised support from all over Scotland and beyond with the kind of nationalistic rallying call which was typified in the fifth report: "... every true Patriot must regard the operations of such an Institution, to be most intimately connected with the vigour and the improvement, the happiness and stability of our country". [47]

The Institution for the Education of Deaf and Dumb Children also had aspirations to national influence. In its first three years both the supporters of the Society and the children it admitted came from Edinburgh and the surrounding area. In 1814 an auxiliary Society was formed in Glasgow which organised subscriptions, investigated possible cases of admission and recommended them to the Edinburgh Institution. In 1818, with the Society in debt and the geographical intake of its pupils widening, they sought to shift the burden of support away from the inhabitants of Edinburgh. The lawyer Hay Donaldson told the General Meeting in May, 1818 that the main object

of the publication and distribution of the annual report was "to impress the character of a National Establishment on the Institution". [48] Applications for support were sent to Scots M.Ps., town councils and to all presbyteries. It was claimed that the Society was "... for the general benefit of Scotland, and it is therefore expected will meet the support of the country at large". [49] In the autumn of 1817 the children of the institution had toured the country, displaying themselves at public examinations, which were followed by meetings to form auxilliary Societies.

However, the impetus towards national organisation proved difficult to sustain. In 1823 the report declared that the institution "derives almost its only resources from this city [i.e. Edinburgh] and its vicinity, and from a very limited number of philanthropic individuals in a few other districts". [50] The Society's self-projection as a national institution and its appeal to national identities left it open to applications for admission from all over Scotland. Yet its failure to significantly widen its support outwith Edinburgh, meant that its resources were inadequate to cope with demand. In 1823 there were 49 children at the institution, compared with 50 five years earlier. A further 26 were on a waiting list as the result of inadequate funds and a lack of accommodation.

Even in Societies whose field of operations was confined to Edinburgh, the appeal to Scottish national identity was a prevalent theme. For example, when Sir Henry Moncrieff-Wellwood responded to opposition to the Lancastrian School Society he contrasted the 'intolerant' and narrow-minded views of English Anglicans to the 'enlightened' Scottish attitudes to education. He argued that

Scottish Presbyterians "know much better than all their southern neighbours ever did, the inestimable advantages of teaching the poor to read". [51]

In the case of the Edinburgh Institute nationalism mingled with appeals to civic pride in Edinburgh as the metropolis of Scotland. It modelled its format and regulations on similar institutions in London. Noting the formation of these societies it commented that it was surprising that "in a city so famed for the intelligence of its population, and the attachment of all ranks to literary pursuits, such an establishment has not been attempted before this time". [52]

Thus, educational voluntary associations appealed to the enlightened and benevolent patrons and guardians of the poor whose role was to cultivate the minds of a potentially threatening ignorant population. This was projected as being in the interests of the economic prosperity and social stability of the 'country' or the 'community'. Insofar as the aims of the education of the working classes involved inculcating their consent to unequal economic and social relationships, the interests of the nation and the community were congruent with those of the bourgeoisie.

This provided a potentially powerful ideological basis for middle class collective action. However, the institutional form of educational voluntary associations structured a set of unequal power relationships within the middle class itself.

Finance, Patronage and Power

Most educational voluntary associations found it necessary to invest their collective resources in property. There were two main reasons. Firstly, Societies such as the Institution for the Education of the Deaf and Dumb and the Lancastrian School Society

required functional premises suitable for the operations of their particular educational systems. In the LSS it was necessary to acquire premises able to accommodate several hundred children under the supervision of one teacher and his monitors. A Lancastrian school had been established under the auspices of the Beneficient Society but had failed due to the lack of space in the schoolroom. [53] The Deaf and Dumb Institute, which functioned as a boarding school, also considered space important. They found their Chessel's Court premises to be inadequate to the segregation of pupils during a typhus outbreak in 1818. [54] New buildings also functioned to reproduce social attitudes, such as the segregation of male and female education in the LSS system.

Secondly, for institutions not yet fully sanctioned by public consensus, the buildings themselves defined the role which educational associations had in society, and, to a certain extent, legitimated this role. Also schoolrooms, like prisons and asylums, were institutions which defined and created ideal patterns of behaviour in people who were potentially disruptive elements in society. These special institutions were defined as being for the benefit of the community, yet were enclosed from it. Cockburn described the siting of the Lancastrian School thus: "The original school was a long, low, wood and brick erection, stretched on the very top of the Calton Hill, where it was then the fashion to stow away everything that was too abominable to be tolerated elsewhere". [55]

A permanent building suited to the purposes of a Society, however, gave voluntary associations an aura of being established and allowed them to operate autonomously and claim public respectability.

They were able to control admissions not only of children but of middle class visitors who could attend only at specified times. Public respectability was a prime concern of the Edinburgh Institute which hired St. Mary's Chapel in the evenings for its lectures. In 1812 it started a fund to purchase accommodation and hoped to "engage in its support a greater proportion of the higher classes, whose influence in society would recommend it to general notice ...". [56]

However, the requirement to invest in 'cultural plant' meant a dependency on wealthy supporters. This led to an internal division within some Societies between ordinary subscribers and 'governors' who had a financial stake in the property of the Society. Their money allowed them to buy more power. Wealthy supporters were important, not only in the generation of capital for property purchases and development, but also as guarantors of credit.

The need to raise substantial sums of money to support schools tended to mean that the financial costs of membership for educational Societies were usually higher than those which we described for religious voluntary associations.

Minimum Membership Subscriptions of Education Societies

Institution for the Education of Deaf and Dumb	(governor)	one guinea
Edinburgh Institute		half a guinea
Society for the Support of Gaelic Schools		half a guinea
Lancastrian School Society		half a guinea
Society for Promotion of Education of the Poor in Ireland		half a guinea
Female Education Society		five shillings

However, the payment of larger fees entitled the subscriber to special influence. In the Lancastrian School Society payment of ten guineas entitled the subscriber to nominate a scholar to gratis

education at the institution. In this way the traditional paternal role of the Kirk session or the wealthy individual was being institutionalised in a new context. In 1813, ten individuals out of 398 donations and subscriptions were entitled to nominate scholars.

In the Deaf and Dumb Institute one guinea was the minimum subscription for a governor. Ten guineas entitled subscribers to a governorship for life and a donation of £200 enabled the patron to have one child permanently at the institution. Such conditions led to highly differentiated classes of membership. Only the Duke of Buccleuch had the privilege of patronising a child in 1814. There were, however, thirty life governors in that year (listed separately from the other subscribers). They were overwhelmingly from the legal, landowning and banking sections of the bourgeoisie. In the list of annual subscriptions the frequency of level of donations was as follows.

Institution for the Education of Deaf and Dumb Children - Subscriptions, 1814-15

Level of Subscription	Frequency	Total
five guineas	1	5 5 0
three guineas	3	9 9 0
two guineas	8	16 16 0
one guinea	106	111 6 0
one pound	3	3 0 0
half a guinea	47	24 13 6
five shillings and sixpence	1	5 6
five shillings	10	2 10 0
	179	£173 4 0

We can see from the above table that about one third of participants had membership status less than the position of governor. Influence within the Society was thus highly differentiated.

Similar differentiation occurred in the Society for the Support

of Gaelic Schools. In this association an annual subscription of three guineas or a single donation of twenty guineas elevated the member to the status of governor.

In the Edinburgh Institute there were three classes of members: annual subscribers (half a guinea), life subscribers (five guineas) and proprietors (ten guineas). The property of the institution was vested in the proprietors who appointed the managers of the institution.

In generating capital for the specific purpose of building new premises, wealthy subscribers were particularly important. The Lancastrian School Society raised funds for the building of their new school in 1812 by issuing loan shares of £20 each. These were to be gradually repaid, with interest, from the surplus proceeds of school fees and annual subscriptions. The estimated cost of the building (including the draining and enclosing of the ground) was £2000. [57] The amount raised was only £1200, but the building went ahead since elite approbation of the Society ensured its financial creditability. Fifty-one persons were named as loan subscribers towards the new school. As the table below demonstrates the banking and commerical fraction of the middle class dominates this elite group which had a direct financial interest in the progress of the Society.

Occupation Classification of Loan Subscribers to the LSS

Occupation	Frequency
Commerce	9
Banking	4
Legal	8
Religion	5
Distribution/Processing	5
Females	5
No Occupational Title	4
Medicine	2
Missing Cases	9
Total	51

Like the LSS, the Institute for the Education of Deaf and Dumb Children was reliant on credit in matters of property investment. By the beginning of 1814, the Society had just under £650 lodged in the bank of Sir William Forbes (who also held the LSS account). [58] Up to this point, the Society has accommodated pupils in a rented house at an annual cost of £35. The General Meeting of 1814 authorised the purchase of a house and garden in the Canongate district of the city. The cost was £1000 together with an additional £170 for fitting up a schoolroom. In proceeding with the purchase the Society consciously indebted itself. However the wealth and status of its leading supporters ensured its credit-worthiness. Indeed, its banker was a life governor of the institution! More specifically, the role of the Society's secretary, the Tory lawyer J.F. Gordon, was crucial. He put forward his own financial security on a loan of £200.

Whatever the financial dependency of middle class voluntary associations on the elite, all the major Societies under discussion in this chapter accorded value to the patronage of elite figures. The Duke of Buccleuch was president of the Lancastrian School Society and the Deaf and Dumb Institute. The Earl of Moray was president of the Gaelic School Society and the Earl of Selkirk was the figure-head for the Society for Promoting the Education of the Poor in Ireland. All these Societies also had a second tier of high-status vice-presidents dominated by the lawyers and gentry. The status of such figures was exploited to influence public opinion and bargain for legitimacy. For example, when Charles Grant the M.P. for Inverness addressed the General Meeting of the Gaelic School Society in December, 1816 his statement that the Society did not interfere with the SSPCK was used in the annual report and the lawyer George Ross

moved "that he be requested to permit his name to be enrolled as a Vice-President of the Institution". [59] The LSS and SPEPI had an additional tier of office bearers called 'extraordinary directors', dominated by lawyers and, in the case of the SPEPI by Established Church ministers. It was only at the level of 'ordinary director' that the management of the Societies was carried out. This included the selection of teachers and teaching materials and the admisssion of pupils (although in the Deaf and Dumb Institute admissions were decided at a pool of subscribers at the A.G.M.).

A final example of status differentiation within educational voluntary associations is provided by the role of women in the Lancastrian School Society's school for girls. The funds and general management of the school were under the control of the (male) LSS committee. However ladies were to deal with "the immediate superintendence" of the school, "many of whom have voluntarily offered their services". [60] In contrast to the voluntary services of the lady visitors, female patronesses appear to have been invited to support the Society: "A considerable number of ladies of the first distinction, both in rank and public estimation, have been pleased to take it on under their protection as patronesses". [61]

Religion and Politics

Religious and political identities also divided the middle class and mitigated against the universalising claims of educational Societies. The Society for the Support of Gaelic Schools was clearly a Dissenters' alternative to the Established Church's SSPCK. Conflict between the two Societies can be inferred from the frequent claims by the GSS that they were not in conflict! Although the Society attracted the support of some Established Kirk clergy, such

as David Dickson and Henry Grey, Dissenting influence on committees was overwhelming. Moreover, an examination of reported speakers at General Meetings between 1812 and 1816 shows that Dissenting Ministers spoke three times as much than did Established clergy. [62] Opposition to the Society can be read between the lines of comments such as that in the sixth annual report which argued that "unanimous approbation" could not be expected from the outset, but that "objections" were now decreasing. [63]

However, the Lancastrian School Society, which provoked religious divisions and political factionalism in England, is perhaps the most fruitful case study in which to examine divisions and assimilations within the middle class. Although originally supported by Evangelicals, the LSS in England was bitterly opposed by many Anglicans. Men such as Professor Henry Marsh supported the Anglican Schools of the National Society (formed in 1811) arguing that the national system of education should be controlled by the national church and that schools should teach the liturgy of the Church of England which was established by law. [64] Others, such as William Firth, went so far as to claim that Lancastrian schools were a seditious threat to the state. [65]

In Edinburgh such overt hostility was much rarer. Cockburn, however, suggests that it was "hated" by "all true Tories" who tried to obstruct it rather than oppose it openly. [66] He testifies that some of the established clergy tried to get the Presbytery of Edinburgh to "crush it indirectly". An Episcopalian bishop in Edinburgh preached against the Society. It was in response to this and a hostile advertisement in the Edinburgh Evening Courant in December, 1811 that Henry Wellwood Moncrieff delivered his sermon in

St. Andrew's Church for the LSS. He argued that the use of liturgies and catechisms to the exclusion of the uninterrupted reading of the Bible would be "disgusting to our people and repuguant to our manners". [67]

The support of so many of the Moderate establishment of the Kirk did much to promote middle class consensus for the LSS. Indeed, the Established Church was influential in the Society despite its professed non-denomination nature. In 1814, following criticism in the press that the Society's schools were poorly attended, the managers gave each of the Kirk sessions the right to send five pupils to the institution free of charge "it being understood that the children of proper individuals, of whatever religious persuasion, shall partake of this privilege". [68]

The other main traditional body of authority in education, the town council, was also supportive. The town council gave the Society land on which to build its original school house on Calton Hill. It sanctioned church congregational collections on behalf of the Society. The Lord Provost was an extraordinary director ex officio. When the Lancastrian supporter Joseph Fox visited Edinburgh in February, 1814 and dined with 'friends' of the institution at Oman's Tavern, most of the members of the town council were reported to be present. [69]

Although the LSS included prominent Whig supporters such as Francis Jeffrey, Henry Cockburn, Henry Moncrieff-Wellwood and the editor of the pro-Whig Edinburgh Review Archibald Constable, an analysis of the political complexion of its leadership reveals Tory domination. Among the twenty-four extraordinary directors in 1813, a total of fourteen Tory supporters can be identified. [70] Only three

Whigs could be positively identified. Among ordinary directors six Tories and two Whigs could be identified. At least one of the two secretaries, the lawyer George Lyon, was a Tory voter. Of the 169 original subscribers to the Society, at least thirty-four were members of the Pitt Club in 1820-21.

In 1814, potential divisions over the dissenting connotations of the name of the Society were resolved following Lancaster's split with the London institution. At the A.G.M. of the Edinburgh Lancastrian School Society chaired by Robert Dundas the Lord Chief Baron and supported by the Lord Provost and the Tory M.P. Sir George Clerk, it was unanimously agreed "That the name of this Society shall be the 'Edinburgh Education Society'; and that the object of this Society shall be to extend the blessings of education to the lower classes of the community on the principles of the New System". [71] The motion was moved by the Tory lawyer Hay Donaldson. Immediately afterwards Henry Jardine proposed a motion of thanks to the town council for the support which they had "uniformly" given the Society. [72]

Rather as the Edinburgh Bible Society had attempted to achieve consensus by claiming a local independence from factionalised movements south of the border, the Lancastrian School Society similarly sought to disassociate itself from the controversy over national schools in England. The Edinburgh LSS directors argued that they were above the Bell/Lancaster dispute which had divided a common interest group which they called the 'Friends of Education'. Although they had taken Lancaster's name in their title in order to give a sense of purpose to their institution they reassured all their supporters that "they neither meant to attach themselves wholly to

Joseph Lancaster nor to detract in the most remote degree from the merit of Dr. Bell". [73] Consensus was affirmed by appealing for the cooperation of "benevolent men of every description". The Directors stressed that "The Edinburgh Society is in all respects an independent society; it stands completely on its own ground, and has no compact or association with any other. It has no party attachments or party views". [74]

Thus, the LSS began by challenging the established authority of the Established Church and the town council by offering a system of popular education outwith the control of the Kirk and Magistrates. However, the religious and political establishment in Edinburgh was much more receptive to the aims of the Society than Anglicans south of the border, and responded by occupying positions of power to influence the LSS from within. Tory and Established Church hegemony was achieved through accommodation rather than compromise. A broad alliance of interests was formed between the established political elite and liberal, dissenting lower status elements of the middle class. In 1813 there were 398 subscribers and donators, and a further 119 for the girls school, giving it the largest individual membership of any educational Society in Edinburgh of the period.

Conclusions

The 1810s were years when the middle class showed enormous interest in popular education, both religious and secular. In Edinburgh a cluster of important voluntary associations were formed on the basis of this interest in a short space of time. They were one set of responses to the problem of how the Scottish system of education was to develop given the strains of population expansion, commercialisation and urbanisation.

The issue of education necessarily involved the middle class in the process of their self-definition. Organic intellectuals like Christopher Anderson or Hay Donaldson produced a consciousness in people with wealth, influence and leisure of their role as guardians of the poor with a duty to cultivate their minds in the interests of economic prosperity and social stability.

The interests and identities expressed and formed by educational voluntary societies provided the basis for cohesive middle class action. As with religious Societies appeals for support deployed terms of address such as 'benevolent', 'patriotic', 'citizens', and 'enlightened' to emphasise aspects of mutuality of social identity. Yet whereas the use of such terms allowed directors to rest authority for their actions on the approbation of the community, or even to speak on behalf of the Scottish nation, relatively high subscription rates and the elitist social milieu of meetings limited the actual constituency of supporters. Societies stepped outside the traditional institutional framework of magistrates, heritors and Kirk sessions to claim public legitimacy in their own right. However, as we saw in the area of policing (and to a certain extent in religious voluntary associations), these traditional sources of power were often a key element in the new institutions and displayed considerable flexibility in accommodating issues of 'public' interest.

The Societies tended to be led by the landowning - legal - clerical elite. This was partly due to a dependency on the very wealthy to generate capital and credit. However there was also a persistent attachment to the value of the gentry as patrons, benefactors, and models of respectability which, it was assumed, the

public would wish to emulate.

The high participation by the elite in educational voluntary associations enabled the Directors to project national aspirations with some confidence. Educational Societies were the popularisers of the tradition of the Enlightenment and the diffusers of a sense of national economic regeneration. This idea was to be carried through to the 1820s when the School of Arts asserted that "the honour and prosperity of the country are so deeply interested" in their activities. [75]

Despite divisions of status, wealth and power within educational voluntary associations, they promoted consensus around the general principle and aims of education and brought the issue into the public domain in a way which provided the intellectual and practical groundwork for the proliferation of 'local' schools in the 1820s.

This chapter has added to the evidence produced in Chapters Four and Five of the ability of elite-led voluntary associations in Edinburgh to mobilise middle class support on broad issues of common interest. Despite certain underlying intra-class tensions, they were highly successful in projecting a sense of cohesive action and informing voluntary association participants and the wider urban community with a common sense of purpose. The extent of this cohesiveness will be given more quantitative precision in the next chapter.

ENDNOTES

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4. Donald J. Withrington, 'Schooling, literacy and society', in T.M. Devine and Rosalind Mitchison (eds.), People and Society in Scotland, vol. 1, 1760-1830, Edinburgh, 1988, p.178. There are regional variations in the relative proportions of public and private schools. In Scotland as a whole only 35.76% were publicly funded, compared with 50.13% private. As well as these categories there were also charity schools and those funded by gifts and bequests.

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6. First Annual Report of the Society for the Support of Gaelic Schools, 2nd ed., Edinburgh, 1812, p.5.

7. Observations ..., 1811, op.cit., p.4.

8. Edinburgh Institute, [Prospectus], Edinburgh, 1812.

9. Daniel Sandford, A sermon .. for the benefit of the schools under the direction of the Lancastrian School Society, Edinburgh, 1813, p.12.

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25. For an account of the development of Lancaster's schools see Edinburgh Review, no. 37, 1811, pp.4-21.

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46. Information from the addresses of names in the subscription lists published with the annual reports.

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CHAPTER SEVEN

PATTERNS OF VOLUNTARY ASSOCIATION SUPPORT

So far we have suggested that certain common characteristics of voluntary associations in early nineteenth century Edinburgh gave them coherence as a cultural form and made them consistently appealing to the emerging social identities of the middle classes. Most were public agencies which sought, in different ways, to influence the relationships between the 'inhabitants' and the working classes in material and ideological terms. The 'inhabitants' - the owners of property and economic resources in the town and the wealthiest consumers of its products - defined themselves by using terms of reference such as 'opulent', 'benevolent', 'citizens', and 'public' in such a way as to project themselves as representatives of the whole community and arbiters of the social relationships between themselves and the working classes. Despite this unity of broad purpose and form, we have discussed how voluntary associations varied in their sources of impetus, specific aims, language of appeals for support, membership criteria, spheres of influence, relationships with established authority, leadership structures, propensity to seek high status patronage, dependency on mobilisation of capital, directness of contact with the 'objects' of their charity, and so on.

In this chapter we shall use a range of indicators to demonstrate the social characteristics of supporters of different types of voluntary association. We shall also crosstabulate data from a variety of sources to discover patterns of association between different Societies and between these Societies and formal organisations of governmental power. By selecting a variety of types of voluntary association we shall explore coherencies and divergences in patterns of affiliation to organisations which appealed to different social identities and attracted different interests. The

wider purpose is to examine the complexity of social formation within the Edinburgh middle classes.

To this end, we shall draw together data sources which were created for different purposes and which contain different kinds of information displayed in different formats and in varying degrees of detail and accuracy. The data sources were of three main kinds.

Firstly, there were published lists of committee members and subscribers to various voluntary associations. Such nominal listings served to define the social character of the organisation, to engender public confidence in its activities and to encourage further support. When the Edinburgh Review reviewed publications on educational charities in 1811, it commented that "we should like to see a more full list of donations and annual subscriptions, as nothing more directly tends to facilitate contributions than the seeing what others in like circumstances with ourselves have given". [1] Such lists not only declared the personal identity of people by name, but also advertised indicators of their social identity by occupational title, address or courtesy title. The extent of such information varied between lists and within the same list. The appearance of a name on a subscription list implied a social statement about a specific choice of interest and an affirmation of mutuality of identity with like-minded people within the context of the aims and values of the organisation.

The second type of data source was what might be called the social register. The specific documents used were the Post Office Directory of 1812-13 and an unpublished list of Edinburgh householders with property valued at or above an annual rent of £100 (Scots). We have discussed the nature of these sources and the

inferences that can be drawn from them in Chapter Two. Each gave an operational definition of the Edinburgh middle class. Most of the entries on our subscription and committee lists were likely to appear on these larger lists, but in different formats.

Thirdly there were sources which gave information about persons who held formally sanctioned positions of authority in local government. Details of town councillors, magistrates and police commissioners were officially documented in the minutes of the town council and the minutes of the Edinburgh Commissioners of Police. Such authorities could delegate power to committees such as that appointed by the commissioners of police to investigate the problem of begging in 1813.

Of these sources, the selection of subscription and committee lists was particularly crucial. Societies representing a variable typology of aims, organisational form and social identity were chosen to display expected divergences in chosen interests and affiliations. The following sources were selected:

1. Subscribers to the Religious Tract Society, Feb. 1812 - Feb. 1813 [2]

This Society (discussed in Chapter Five) printed and distributed tracts, books and Bibles. It encouraged subscriptions from a broad social range with a relatively small minimum subscription of five shillings. Its ecumenical appeal to all Christians provided opportunities for Dissenters to have influence in the dissemination of religious knowledge. It had a relatively small but hierarchial Committee of sixteen office bearers, including a President and four vice-presidents. However, individual members had autonomy in distributing tracts which they bought from the Society's own

repository at reduced prices. Tracts were distributed in other parts of Scotland and abroad, giving the Society a wide sphere of activity. The Society did not need to raise large amounts of capital, relying heavily on credit from printers, bookbinders and paper suppliers. There were 287 names on the list of subscribers.

2. Subscribers to the Edinburgh Institution for the Encouragement of Sacred Music, 1816 [3]

This was a different type of religious Society. It declared that "the leading object of this institution shall be to instruct singers in the performance of church music and oratories". [4] The main aim was to establish a school of music but much attention was given to public performances for the "satisfaction of subscribers". Thus, the aims of the Society were largely introverted. National identity was a powerful strand of the Society's appeal. It sought to correct a "national deficiency" in church singing. There was close connection with the national church. The first General Meeting, for example, was held in the General Assembly Aisle. The committee of directors was dominated by Church of Scotland ministers. The committee comprised thirty-two directors, twelve vice-presidents and had the Duke of Buccleuch as president. The Society advertised the approbation of the town council and magistracy, symbolised by the Lord Provost chairing the first A.G.M. The appeal was to "respectable inhabitants" whose support was encouraged by holding public performances during race week in venues of repute such as the Assembly Rooms and the Episcopal Chapel. Subscriptions were a minimum of one guinea. There were 379 names on the list.

3. Subscribers to the Lancastrian School Society, 1810 [5]

This list allows us to contrast the characteristics of

affiliates with an interest in secular rather than religious instruction. We have discussed the LSS in some detail in Chapter Six. Its emphasis on non-denominational schooling was likely to attract Dissenters. However the Society had support from the Established Church and the town council. It had a large, high status, hierarchical committee of a president, four vice-presidents, twenty-four extraordinary directors and twenty-six ordinary directors (including two secretaries and a treasurer). The leadership had great influence in the management of schools. The minimum subscription to the Society was half a guinea. The need to equip purpose-built schools made it dependent on the patronage of wealthy subscribers. Although Edinburgh-based, it aspired to act as a model for Lancastrian schools in Scotland. There were 162 names on the list .

4. Members of the Edinburgh Subscription Library, 1812 [6]

This is a type of leisure or recreational Society existing primarily for the benefit of members. It was explicitly exclusionary in that its rules limited the number of members (to 400 at this time). Membership depended on payment of an entry fee of twelve guineas rather than annual subscriptions. The committee structure had a simple hierarchy of a president and fifteen other committee members including a secretary and treasurer. The presidents were not high status patrons: between 1811 and 1813 they included an apothecary, a Dissenting minister and a surgeon. [7] Dissenters such as Andrew Lothian, James Hall, James Peddie and Thomas McCrie were frequently on committee lists, as were the Evangelical Church of Scotland ministers T.S. Jones and David Dickson. There were 296 names on the list.

5. Office Bearers for the Society for the Suppression of Begging: elected Nov. 1813 [8]

In Chapter Four we discussed the close links between this Society and the formal political establishment which arose as one aspect of the reform of policing in Edinburgh in 1813. This source can be used to explore such links further as well as to examine the social characteristics and affiliations of those who had direct authority in the regulation of poor relief.

6. Office Bearers of the Lancastrian School Society, 1813 [9]

Obviously, the typological features of LSS which we described above are relevant here. Given the Society's aim of inculcating principles of religion and morality and habits of industry and order, we shall explore to what extent the promoters of such principles were involved in religious or poor relief Societies with similar aims.

7. Office Bearers of the Edinburgh Auxiliary Missionary Society, 1813 [10]

This Society, which we discussed in Chapter Five, was similar to the Religious Tract Society in its interdenominational appeal. It had an unusually low subscription rate of a penny a week. It had no requirement to generate large amounts of capital. In acting as an auxiliary to the London Missionary Society, its activities had no direct effect on the working classes in Edinburgh. Its twenty-four member, Dissenting-dominated committee was smaller than those of the Lancastrian or Beggars Societies.

Principles of nominal record linkage were used in order to synthesise this disparate information such that the data could be reorganised in a consistent format, making it susceptible to meaningful categorisation and manipulation. The feasibility of a semi-automated record linkage exercise was supported by the

accessibility and ease of handling of the sources and their limited time span and geographical location.

To achieve consistency and to give regularity to the identification of common names between source lists, it was decided to relate the appearance of each name on the smaller source lists to its appearance in the Post Office Directory of 1812-13. The Directory was, therefore, regarded as the base population. Names which were successfully identified in the base population were then included in a single datafile with the address and occupational information from the Directory recorded in a consistent manner.

Rules of nominal record linkage were followed in order to specify the basis of the connection between entries on the smaller source lists and the base population. Such rules enabled a consistent evaluation to be made of the probability of a 'true' link between entries on the lists. We should note that the inferences drawn about the presence or absence of links between entries on separate lists are a theoretical construct that merely give an approximation to historical reality. [11] In the various sources there may well have been errors and misinformation, wrongful admission and exclusion of entries, and so on. Thus there is no such thing as a wholly 'true' positive or null link between entries. Instead, we are employing operationally valid linkage criteria which will enable us to make consistent inferences.

The varying extent and format of information within and between lists created problems in deciding how much information to use as linkage criteria. Unique name linkage was the major principle employed. [12] The single appearance of a name in each list established the entry as an operationally true link. By the same

token, the single occurrence of a name in one list and its complete absence in the other established the entry as an operationally true null link. If the names were not unique, it was then deemed acceptable to use other information such as occupation or address to differentiate between a variety of potentially true links. In the example below the occupational component would be used to link the entry of James Gibson on the list of library shareholders with his appearance in the Post Office Directory:

Post Office Directory	Subscription Library
James Gibson, tailor, 31 N. Bridge	
James Gibson, W.S., York Place	James Gibson, W.S.

Links which were accepted as valid on the basis of supplementary information other than names were recognised as qualitatively different from unique name links. In particular, analysis at a later stage of a variable such as occupation might be contaminated if that variable had itself been part of the linkage criteria. Therefore, it was important, when creating our single datafile, to assign clear indicators which would distinguish the criteria upon which links between lists had been validated. The following indicator codes were used:

1 = unique name link
0 = null link
8 = link based on supplementary information
9 = failed link (insufficient distinctive information)

Following these principles, each of the smaller lists were checked against the base population. Following the identification or non-identification of each entry in the base population a string of data was then created on a computer file which had pre-defined field lengths for each social variable. For example:

ABERCROMBIE/JOHN/SURGEON/York Pl./York Pl./1/0

In this example the first two fields give surname and firstname. The third field gives occupational title, the fourth and fifth fields display workplace and home address. The sixth field indicates the unique appearance in the Directory and (say) the LSS subscription list. The seventh field indicates the non-appearance of the name in (say) the list of police commissioners.

The alphanumeric fields clearly required meaningful categorisation. The occupational titles used consistently from the Directory listing were coded according to the principles discussed in Chapter Two. Information relating to home and workplace address was also categorised and coded. The following scheme was devised to indicate broad residential and commercial areas:

1 = New Town : high status residential area

2 = North and South Bridge : large retailing and commercial units

3 = High Street : trading/craft manufacturing/increasingly low status residences

4 = Canongate : separate administrative district at foot of High Street

5 = Leith

6 = Grassmarket/Cowgate : lower middle class shops and small businesses

7 = Nicolson St./Bristo/Lauriston : lower middle class, several Dissenting Chapels

8 = George Square/Bruntsfield : high status residential area

9 = Missing cases

11 = Area of address unknown

12 = Outside Edinburgh and surrounding district

13 = Other suburban areas : e.g. Dalry, Fountainbridge

In this way a rectangular computer file was manually created such that horizontal rows were comprised of social variables relating to individual people (including their appearance or non-appearance on the various source lists), and vertical columns which related to one specific social variable. Initially, this datafile was created using a text editor on Edinburgh University's EMAS mainframe computer with a view to manipulating the data on SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences). However, at a later stage the file was imported to Abacus Concept's 'Statview' statistical package which was considered more efficient and user-friendly. This software was used on an Apple MacIntosh computer.

Having created the datafile in this way it was then possible to crosstabulate the codings of the different social variables and view the results in the 'observed frequency' table. The remainder of this chapter will display the results of such crosstabulations and comment on their significance.

The table below details the percentage of frequency of occupational codes for each of the full membership lists described previously. The figures in brackets represent the absolute cell total. A similar form of presentation will be used in the following tables. Only cases in each list which were uniquely linked by name to the base population have been used. Code 8 links which may have used occupation data as a linking criteria were excluded from this analysis, as were null links and failed links. The totals comprised 38% of Religious Tract Society subscribers, 48% of Lancastrian School subscribers, 46% of Library members and 41% of Sacred Music Society members.

Social Characteristics of Selected Voluntary Associations

(a) Occupation (Unique name lists)

Occupation	Religious Tract		Lancastrian		Library		Sacred Music	
Agriculture	0.91%	(1)	0.00	(0)	2.27	(3)	0.00	(0)
Distribution/ Processing	17.27	(19)	7.79	(6)	13.64	(18)	7.01	(11)
Dealing	0.91	(1)	3.89	(3)	4.54	(6)	1.91	(3)
Commerce	7.27	(8)	6.49	(5)	18.94	(25)	7.01	(11)
Banking	4.54	(6)	6.49	(5)	7.57	(10)	1.91	(3)
Agents	0.00	(0)	0.00	(0)	0.00	(0)	1.27	(2)
Clerks	0.91	(1)	0.00	(0)	3.03	(4)	1.91	(3)
Manufacturing	4.54	(5)	3.89	(3)	2.27	(3)	0.63	(1)
Craft	15.45	(17)	2.59	(2)	7.57	(10)	3.18	(5)
Professions	2.73	(3)	1.29	(1)	6.06	(8)	3.18	(5)
Medicine	4.54	(5)	3.89	(3)	4.54	(6)	3.82	(6)
Legal	4.54	(5)	35.06	(27)	14.39	(19)	33.76	(53)
Religion	18.18	(20)	10.39	(8)	4.54	(6)	8.92	(14)
Miscellaneous Services	3.64	(4)	0.00	(0)	0.76	(1)	0.00	(0)
Construction	0.00	(0)	1.29	(1)	1.51	(2)	0.00	(0)
National Govt.	0.00	(0)	1.29	(1)	3.03	(4)	3.18	(5)
Local Govt.	0.00	(0)	1.29	(1)	1.51	(2)	1.27	(2)
Defence	0.91	(1)	3.89	(3)	0.76	(1)	1.27	(2)
No Occupational Title	13.60	(15)	10.39	(8)	3.03	(4)	19.74	(31)
Totals	100	(110)	100	(77)	100	(132)	100	(157)

A number of key points stand out. The legal and commerical groups show a high propensity to join most types of Society. Lawyers are overwhelmingly numerically dominant in the two Societies which

have high subscriptions, Established Church support, links with local government, nationalist identities and high status patrons. They were much less likely to join the Dissent/Evangelical-influenced, low subscription Tract Society, where their proportion is half as many as might be expected from their frequency in the Directory as a whole. [13] The figure of 4.54% is close to that noted in Chapter Five for lawyer participation in the Edinburgh Bible Society (5.27%) which had similar aims and Dissenting influences. The observed frequency of the commercial and banking sector is higher than expected in each Society, but particularly in the subscription library where merchants are more than three times their proportion in the base population. The library's newspapers would have provided merchants with valuable commercial information as well as keeping them in touch with the places which formed their trading networks.

The city's traders were more likely to join the Religious Tract Society than the expensive, elite-led Lancastrian or Sacred Music Societies where their numbers were about half what we might have expected. In the manufacturing sector there were wide variations in the relative proportions of each Society. The strongest affiliation of this group was clearly the Tract Society where their representation contrasted sharply with their non-participation in the Lancastrian and Sacred Music Societies. The masters of the craft trades had a low participation rate in the LSS, similar to their lack of support for the Gratis Sabbath School Society which we noted in Chapter Five. Persons of no occupational title (from which we infer high status and probably some form of rentier income) comprise almost one fifth of the Sacred Music Society membership and their proportion of that Society is very close to their proportion of the base

population. However, they were rather less likely to join the other types of Society, especially, despite their leisure time, the subscription library.

Finally, it is worth re-emphasising that all these Societies, although advertised to the 'public', were overwhelmingly comprised of the owners of the means of social production and the employers of wage labour. Employees do not participate, except for a few clerks. The membership is also, manifestly, drawn from the urban community as the small frequency of agricultural occupations shows.

(b) Home Address

Area	Religious Tract		Lancastrian		Library		Sacred Music	
New Town	17.81%	(26)	45.23	(38)	31.69	(45)	47.72	(94)
Bridges	3.42	(5)	0.00	(0)	1.41	(2)	0.51	(1)
High Street	7.53	(11)	9.52	(8)	11.97	(17)	3.55	(7)
Canongate	2.74	(4)	1.19	(1)	3.52	(5)	3.55	(7)
Leith	1.37	(2)	1.19	(1)	2.11	(3)	4.06	(8)
Grassmarket/ Cowgate	7.53	(11)	2.38	(2)	4.93	(7)	0.00	(0)
Nicholson St./ Bristo/ Lauriston	10.27	(15)	4.76	(4)	9.86	(14)	3.05	(6)
George Square/ Bruntsfield	2.74	(4)	8.33	(7)	4.93	(7)	2.54	(5)
Unknown	5.48	(8)	10.71	(9)	7.75	(11)	4.57	(9)
Outside Edinburgh	23.97	(35)	0.00	(0)	0.00	(0)	0.51	(1)
Other Suburbs	4.11	(6)	2.38	(2)	5.63	(8)	3.05	(6)
Missing information	13.01	(19)	14.28	(12)	16.20	(23)	26.90	(53)
Total	100	(146)	100	(84)	100	(142)	100	(197)

In this analysis unique name links with the Directory have been used, as well as cases which were present on each membership list but not in the Directory, (thus giving differing totals in comparison to the previous table). The intention was to demonstrate which Societies attracted members from outside Edinburgh. Most lists advertised the town of a non-Edinburgh subscriber but the entry would, of course, not appear in the Edinburgh Directory. The disadvantage of using null links with the Directory was that it gave rise to much missing information. Nevertheless such missing informatiom was random and did not bias the results.

By far the most common area of residence for Edinburgh subscribers to all four voluntary Societies was the high-status New Town. The percentage figures for the Lancastrian School Society and the Society for the Encouragement of Sacred Music are strikingly similar. However, New Town residents are rather less predominant in the subscription library and even less so in the Religious Tract Society even if we only consider them as a proportion of Edinburgh subscribers (23.42%). Inhabitants of the lower status areas of the Grassmarket, Cowgate, Nicolson Street, Bristo and Lauriston with their high concentration of Dissenting Chapels were more likely to join the Tract Society or Library than either of our Establishment-supported Societies.

Leith, with its very different social structure from Edinburgh, had this distinctive reflected in cultural relationships with a low number of affiliates to these Edinburgh-based Societies.

Despite the nationalist language and aspirations of the Lancastrian and Sacred Music Societies, only the Religious Tract Society attracted a substantial number of subscribers from other

Scottish towns. This typified the developing network of cooperation between Dissent-based religious Societies in this period.

(c) Workplace Address

Area	Religious Tract		Lancastrian		Library		Sacred Music	
None	10.96%	(16)	9.52	(8)	4.23	(6)	16.24	(32)
New Town	6.16	(9)	32.14	(27)	23.24	(33)	31.47	(62)
Bridges	10.27	(15)	5.95	(5)	10.56	(15)	5.58	(11)
High Street	12.33	(18)	14.28	(12)	21.13	(30)	6.60	(13)
Canongate	2.05	(3)	1.19	(1)	2.82	(4)	4.06	(8)
Leith	1.37	(2)	2.38	(2)	2.82	(4)	1.52	(3)
Grassmarket/ Cowgate	7.53	(11)	2.38	(2)	4.93	(7)	0.00	(0)
Nicolson St./ Bristo/ Lauriston	4.11	(6)	2.38	(2)	6.34	(9)	1.52	(3)
George Square/ Bruntsfield	1.37	(2)	4.76	(4)	0.00	(0)	1.52	(3)
Unknown	6.85	(10)	8.33	(7)	3.52	(5)	4.06	(8)
Outside Edinburgh	23.97	(35)	0.00	(0)	0.00	(0)	0.51	(1)
Other Suburbs	0.68	(1)	1.19	(1)	2.82	(4)	2.03	(4)
Missing information	12.33	(18)	15.48	(13)	17.61	(25)	24.87	(49)
Total	100	(146)	100	(84)	100	(142)	100	(197)

In many cases the home and workplace addresses were identical. This is, to some extent, a reflection of our treatment of our source. The Post Office Directory tended to list business addresses followed by a home address. If only one address was listed we have assumed that the same premises had both a commerical and residential

function. Only when the Directory explicitly distinguished between the home and workplace addresses did we acknowledge this separation. The exception to this guideline was cases where no occupational title was listed, where we assumed that the address was a residential one and that there was no workplace address.

The information on place of work highlights the extent to which the business interests of voluntary association subscribers were concentrated in particular geographical locations. The high frequency of professional men, especially lawyers, makes the high figures for the New Town unremarkable. However, commercial premises are predominantly located in the concentrated area of the High Street and North and South Bridge. The Bridges were a late eighteeth-century development linking the Old and New Towns of Edinburgh and contained many prestigous fixed retailing units and warehouses. The High Street was the traditional trading centre of Edinburgh and was the location for important public offices including the law courts and city chambers. The Directory listed numerous shops and small businesses in the Grassmarket, Cowgate and Bristo areas but these are of relatively little importance as workplaces of subscribers.

(d) Home and Work Separation

Each entry in our datafile was coded either 1 or 0 according to whether or not the Directory distinguished between a home and work address. Generally speaking, the separation of home and work implied relatively high status. However, this indicator of status could be deceptive in certain occupations. Lawyers, for example, were usually listed in the Directory with only one address but their use of writing chambers within a spacious apartment was clearly not analogous to the grocer living about his shop. In the table below we

have again detailed only unique name links but we have excluded lawyers and persons with no occupational title.

	Religious Tract	Lancastrian	Library	Sacred Music
Separation	22.22% (28)	42.85 (21)	44.54 (53)	34.51 (39)
Non-separation	33.33 (42)	30.61 (15)	37.81 (45)	25.66 (29)
Missing information	44.44 (56)	24.49 (12)	17.65 (21)	39.82 (45)

Only in the Religious Tract Society is there a minority of entries with separate home and work addresses listed in the Post Office Directory. This is consistent with occupational and address area information which tended to suggest that the Society attracted comparatively low-status support. Clearly, these figures need to be treated with some caution because of the nature of the source and the extent of missing information, which was largely due to null links with the Directory.

(e) £100 Householders

In the table below a member of a particular Society was considered to be a householder with property in Edinburgh valued at £100 or more if there was: (a) a unique name link between the membership list, the base population (Directory) and the list of £100 householders or (b) if there was a nominal link between the membership list and the base population based on supporting information and that information was also present in the list of £100 householders. A member was considered not to be a £100 householder if: (a) a unique nominal link between the membership list and the base population did not appear on the list of £100 householders or (b) if a code 8 link between the membership list and the base

population (based on supporting information) was not present on the list of £100 householders. As we explained in Chapter Two, lawyers were exempt from the cess tax, the assessment of which the list was designed to assist. Therefore they have been deducted from the frequency of null links, as have persons living outside Edinburgh. Missing information includes: (a) unique name links between the membership list and the base population which had multiple potential links to the list of £100 householders. This situation occurred fairly often because the £100 householders list had frequent surname-only entries; (b) code 8 links between the base population and membership list which had multiple potential links with the £100 householders listed which could not be confirmed because of the absence of supporting information; (c) all failed links between the membership list and base population.

	Religious Tract	Lancastrian	Library	Sacred Music
£100 householder	19.28% (48)	22.96 (31)	24.19 (67)	14.15 (46)
Not £100 householder	38.55 (96)	28.98 (39)	31.05 (86)	32.92 (107)
Missing information	41.36 (103)	40.12 (65)	44.76 (124)	52.92 (172)
(Lawyers and non-Edinburgh)	(40)	(27)	(19)	(54)
Total membership	287	162	296	379

The percentages are net of the lawyers and non-Edinburgh subscribers. If we were to assume that all lawyers were £100 householders, the Lancastrian School Society would have the highest proportion of valuable property owners (39.63%), followed by the Library (30.61%), the Sacred Music Society (28.13%) and the Religious

Tract Society (21.02%).

Thus, by this indicator also the Religious Tract Society has been seen to have attracted affiliates of comparatively low wealth and status. The figures for the high-status Sacred Music Society are undoubtedly contaminated because the gap of six years between the production of the list of householders and the subscribers to the Society is unsuited to nominal record linkage. A smaller time gap would have created more positive links, making the Society similar to the Lancastrian School Society. Among members of the library, close to a third were owners of substantial property.

The entire list of £100 householders (833 names) was only about 10% of the Post Office Directory. Thus in all four Societies there was a much higher proportion of valuable property owners than one might expect from the base population as a whole.

This study of the social composition of four types of voluntary association, using a multidimensional range of indicators of wealth and status, has shown that the professional and commercial elite displayed the greatest propensity to join most types of Societies. In general, those with the highest status occupations, the most valuable properties located in the most prestigous areas formed the majority of voluntary association participants.

However, there were important differences between the Societies. The Lancastrian School Society and the Society for the Encouragement of Sacred Music appealed particularly strongly to the interests of the wealthiest and highest status sectors of the middle class. Both these Societies were actively supported by the town council and the Established Church. Both had large, hierarchical committee structures which included elite patrons. The membership had a relatively

passive role in the achievement of the aims and objectives of these Societies. Both Societies used nationalistic language in their public appeals.

The Subscription Library was the Society for men of business. About one third of the membership were merchants or shopkeepers. Business locations and property valuations indicate that they were mostly of the wealthy sort. This Society had little interest in gaining public influence. Its rules referred to the members rather than to groups outwith the Society. The Society served particular needs for the members such as providing information, providing a forum for business links and, of course, allowing cheap access to books.

The Religious Tract Society had the lowest status social composition according to all indicators. This was the Society which, of the four, was most closely associated with religious dissent. It had the lowest subscription rate. Its individual members were the most active. It had national appeal.

The relationships between the form of Society and the membership which supported it are necessarily symbolic. The membership affirms its interest in the aims and objectives of the Society, votes for and acknowledges its rules, and elects and confirms its confidence in its leadership. Those aims, rules and leadership personnel define the character of the Society and provide the bases of attraction for other like-minded individuals.

Thus, our study so far has revealed clear differences in the interests of different sections of the middle class and divergences in the foci of their social identities.

Voluntary Associations and Formal Power

We have seen above that Societies which were supported or influenced by formal authorities such as the magistrates and town council were more likely to attract high status affiliates. In this section we shall explore further the relationship between local government and different types of voluntary associations. We shall examine to what extent town councillors and magistrates, police commissioners and members of the committee appointed by the police commissioners to investigate the problem of begging were participants in our selected voluntary associations. The names of town councillors and magistrates (who were appointed by the town council) were extracted from the Minutes of Edinburgh Town Council between 1811 and 1816. 109 names were identified. Minutes of the Commissioners of Police for Edinburgh produced 101 names. These two sources are held in the archives of Edinburgh City Chambers. The Begging Committee contained 151 names, excluding ex-officio members such as the police commissioners and certain members of the town council. [14] The occupational composition of this committee was discussed in Chapter Four.

The table below shows what percentage of each Society was comprised of members of these bodies of authority. The actual number of persons appears in brackets.

	Religious Tract	Lancastrian	Library	Sacred Music
Town councillors/ magistrates	1.39% (4)	2.47 (4)	4.37 (14)	1.58 (6)
Police commissioners	0.35 (1)	4.32 (7)	6.42 (19)	2.37 (9)
Begging committee	4.88 (14)	14.20 (23)	10.13 (30)	8.18 (31)

In general, it can be seen that participation in voluntary associations by persons holding positions of formal authority was rather low. This was particularly the case amongst the oligarchic body of town councillors and magistrates. The elected police commissioners showed a slightly greater propensity to affiliate. The greatest frequency of participation was clearly by members of the begging committee whose powers were derived from the police commissioners. As we discussed in Chapter Four, this committee was heavily dominated by lawyers but did open avenues of public influence for wider sections of the middle class. About one fifth of the committee joined the library and a similar proportion joined the Sacred Music Society. A relatively large percentage of the Lancastrian School Society members were on the Begging Committee. At least twenty of those committee members were on the LSS committee.

Between the Societies, the library was most successful at attracting local government personnel. This was partly a reflection of the social composition of the various bodies. In our list of magistrates and town councillors, 51.02% of unique name links with the base population were either in the 'commerce' or 'distribution/ processing' category. Lawyers predominated among police commissioners (27.78% of unique name links), but 18.52% were merchants of some description.

It may be significant that participation is highest in the type of Society which does not seek influence in public affairs. Those Societies, such as the Lancastrian School Society, which provided alternative avenues of public influence seem less attractive to those who already possessed power. The idea that voluntary associations provided a kind of alternative power structure is worthy of further

research.

Interconnections Between Societies

We have argued that certain types of Societies represented different kinds of interests and appealed to and were supported by a variety of social types. In this section we shall explore whether the identities affirmed and reproduced by certain types of Societies made their memberships more or less likely to support other kinds of Societies.

The table below, read vertically (downwards), gives the proportion of each of our four Societies which had entries linked (on code 8 and code 1 criteria) to the membership lists of the extreme left hand column.

	Religious Tract	Lancastrian	Library	Sacred Music
Society for Suppressing Begging (1813)	32.05% (92)	37.04 (60)	30.74 (91)	30.87 (117)
Lancastrian School Society	9.06 (26)	n.a.	8.11 (24)	5.01 (19)
Subscription Library	10.45 (30)	14.81 (24)	n.a.	4.22 (16)
Sacred Music Society	5.23 (15)	11.73 (19)	5.40 (16)	n.a.
Religious Tract Society	n.a.	16.05 (26)	10.10 (30)	3.95 (15)
Lancastrian School Committee	1.04 (3)	n.a.	2.03 (6)	3.95 (15)
Suppression of Begging Committee	1.74 (5)	3.70 (6)	1.01 (3)	2.77 (11)
Missionary Society Committee	2.79 (8)	0.62 (1)	1.69 (5)	0.00 (0)

A number of points deserve mention. The two Societies with the highest status membership and the closest connections with the political and legal establishment displayed vast differences in their propensity to participate in other Societies. Given their size, the Sacred Music Society membership displayed the lowest participation in other Societies. Its members did, however, occupy a large proportion of the places on the Society for the Suppression of Begging (SSB) committee and the Lancastrian School Society (LSS) committee. With at least a fifth of its membership having no occupational title in the Directory and therefore, perhaps, little direct contact with the relationships of capital and labour, it seems relatively unconcerned with the social issues raised by the Lancastrian and Religious Tract Societies. Also, its Established Church bias may have led it to distrust the ecumenical emphasis of these Societies.

The LSS was also elitist but showed the highest propensity to participate in other Societies. Rather like the Sacred Music Society, the proportion of their support for other Societies was fairly evenly matched. This may be a reflection of their cross-party and interdenominational composition. Its closest connection were with the SSB. One sixth of the committee of the SSB were members of the LSS. Both Societies had a similar interest in public order, and the interconnection of personnel strengthens the argument that there was a coherent strategic response to the threat of disorder around 1812 in Edinburgh.

The Subscription Library and the Religious Tract Society, the two associations with the lowest status membership, displayed a similar propensity to participate in other Societies. Their memberships were twice as likely to participate either in the LSS or

with each other as they were to join the Sacred Music Society. The connections between the Religious Tract Society and the Missionary Society are striking. One third of the Missionary Society committee were Religious Tract members. It is relevant to recall here that about one third of Bible Society members were Religious Tract Society members and that cooperation between religious Dissent-based organisations, as we suggested in Chapter Five, seems particularly marked.

Reading across the table we see that the Society for the Suppression of Begging, which had 2563 members, attracted equal levels of support from each type of Society. This lends weight to the view, advanced in Chapter Four, that the Society was able to attract broadly-based support.

Taking into account the sizes of each membership list, the subscription library was most strongly supported by members of the LSS. The social affinity which the LSS members had with those of the Sacred Music Society is reflected by its supporters being twice as likely to join the SMS as those of the other two Societies. LSS members were also the most frequent supporters of the Religious Tract Society, demonstrating once more the variety of interests and identities which characterised the social composition of that Society.

However, it is worth noting how crucial the selection of sources was for affecting results such as this. The early LSS subscription list (1810) had been chosen partly because it was thought to reflect strong commitment to a relatively unpublicised scheme. If we select the LSS subscription list for 1813 the number of subscribers has more than doubled to 388 (excluding anonymous subscribers). Although this

list is closer in time to our Religious Tract Society list, the proportion of LSS subscribers who were members of the Tract Society had dropped to 10.30% (40). Thus, in 1813 the Religious Tract Society was the least well supported Society by LSS members of those under examination. On the other hand, the effect of linking to a larger list raised the proportion of Religious Tract Society supporters who supported the LSS to 13.94%. This made the LSS the most popular Society (of those studied) among Tract Society members.

Thus, we may argue that whereas the relatively low status membership of the Dissent-based Religious Tract Society displayed a high propensity to participate in the high-status, Establishment-backed Lancastrian School Society, a rather smaller proportion of the LSS membership chose to associate with the Tract Society. It was possible to test the disassociation of Lancastrian School supporters from the comparatively low-status, interdenominational religious Societies by examining their participation in certain other Societies which we have discusssed in previous chapters. The Society for the Support of Gaelic Schools was heavily influenced by Evangelical and Dissenting ministers and its activities overlapped with the Established Church's SPPCK. Similarly, the Edinburgh Bible Society, largely supported by congregationalist and Burgher congregations, was a rival to the Church of Scotland's Scottish Bible Society. The Gratis Sabbath School Society was of comparatively high-status, enjoying support of the parochial sunday-schools. The table below examines the proportion of Lancastrian School and Religious Tract Society members who participated in each of these three Societies. The principles of nominal record linkage outlined above have been applied, and the figures refer to code (1) and code (8) links.

Comparison of Religious Tract and Lancastrian School Society Support for Interdenominational Religious Societies. [15]

	Gaelic Schools	Bible Society	Sabbath Schools
Religious Tract	13.24%	33.80%	17.07%
Lancastrian School	10.49%	23.46%	17.28%

The table shows that a substantially higher proportion of Religious Tract Society supporters joined the Gaelic Schools Society and Bible Society than did the proportion of Lancastrian School supporters. This was particularly true of affiliations to the Bible Society, in which case one third of Tract Society members joined in comparison to less than one quarter of the LSS. It was in the higher status Sabbath School Society that the propensity of LSS supporters to join matched that of the Religious Tract Society members. We shall note that the figures were influenced by shared membership between the LSS and RTS. For example, among members of the LSS who joined the Sabbath School Society two thirds were also members of the RTS.

Thus, the principles, aims and social identities of inter-denominational religious associations attracted a far higher degree of cross-membership between themselves than with members of other types of organisation.

However, although we can observe such particular patterns of association between Societies of different type and of different social composition, we should note that the boundaries between the members of one Society participating in another were rarely starkly drawn. From this we may infer that the interests and identities consistently defined and expressed by a variety of types of voluntary association influenced the affirmation of a multiplicity of roles in

public life by social groups of widely differing wealth and status. The affirmation of these social roles in, for example, instructing and moralising the poor, creating public order, or engaging in the cultural improvement of the nation or the community, inevitably led to a recognition of a commonality of identity and interest which forms the basis of class consciousness.

Conclusions

This socio-metric analysis of the social character of selected types of voluntary association and the relations of personnel between them has elaborated and substantiated aspects of the complexity of social formation by the middle class in Edinburgh. The social, economic and cultural differences which were expressed in divergent social alignments, and the coherencies of perceived shared identities expressed in common forms of collective action have been thematic strands of this chapter, as they have been throughout the thesis.

The section on social characteristics of elite-led voluntary associations with national and city-wide ambitions demonstrated that the various appeals by them to the 'inhabitants', the 'public', 'men of wealth and influence', the 'respectable', the 'community', the 'opulent', the 'pious' and the 'patriotic' were overwhelmingly responded to by urban owners of capital and employers of labour. Moreover the highest status elements of this economic class were the most frequent participants. The high-status occupations in the legal profession and in commerce were disproportionately numerous in relation to the base population. There was a preponderance of participants who lived and/or worked in high status geographical areas. Persons owning valuable property, frequently separated from their place of work, formed high proportions of each Society studied.

On the other hand, lower income and status groups such as shopkeepers, landladies and small producers were far less frequent participants than we might, statistically, expect. Thus, despite variations in aims, functions and organisational form, voluntary associations, generally, reflected and reproduced the values and interests of the elite of the urban population.

However, certain divergent patterns of alignment emerged. Societies most closely associated with the political and religious establishment - the Lancastrian School Society and the Society for the Encouragement of Sacred Music - tended to attract the highest status support on most indicators. The Societies more associated with evangelicalism or religious dissent and which sought or depended upon less elite patronage tended to be of lower status. Such differences require further testing, but the divergent social identities which they reflect suggest that a unitary or straightforward conception of middle class formation is likely to be inadequate.

The complexity of class formation in this period was further emphasised by our section on the relationships between participants in voluntary associations and those who held formal positions of authority and influence in local government. A unitary view of the middle class would have anticipated a convergence of personnel in voluntary associations and local state institutions, implying a monopolisation of positions of power. In fact power appears to have been much more diffuse. There was very limited participation in voluntary associations by town councillors or police commissioners. Participation was more marked among members of the Begging Committee (except in the Religious Tract Society) - a body which itself was a

manifestation of widening influence in public affairs for the middle ranks, at a time when the maintenance of public order was thought to depend on a broad mobilisation of respectable property-owners.

The issue of public order - with its associated values of socialising and moralising the labouring population in the interests of political and economic stability - was a theme common to many voluntary associations and provided a focus for coherent collective responses. The Society for the Suppression of Begging attracted equal proportions of support from the four diverse voluntary Societies studied. Members of secular and religious education Societies shared each other's interests in diffusing 'useful' knowledge to the poor. The Lancastrian School Society, which was successful in attracting a range of political and religious allegiances, showed the highest propensity to participate in other Societies.

However, the economic, religious and status divisions, which we discussed earlier, clearly influenced the pattern of interconnection between Societies. At the leadership level, the high-status Sacred Music Society was closely associated with the Lancastrian School Society. These two Societies also provided the highest proportionate membership of the influential Begging Committee. Yet the elitist Sacred Music Society members had little affinity with the Dissent-based, lower status religious organisations such as the Religious Tract Society or the Auxiliary Missionary Society. Further research showed that such religious Societies had a strong sense of common purpose, manifested by a high degree of interconnection of personnel. This common alignment was more marked than the alignment of Lancastrian School Society supporters with interdenominational

religious Societies.

Thus, the overall picture inferred from voluntary association affiliation is of an emergent class unity. By the end of the 1810s in Edinburgh there was a proliferation of Societies which adopted and reproduced broadly similar values and relationships which expressed common interests of the urban middle class. These Societies were led by a consistently identifiable elite. However, the types of social divisions and multi-dimensional identities which we have explored in this chapter suggest that the articulation of a self-conscious, unified class interest was not yet fully formed. In our final chapter we shall elaborate on this theme in relation to its development in the 1820s.

ENDNOTES

1. Edinburgh Review, vol. xxxvii, p.18.

2. Report of the Edinburgh Religious Tract Society, Edinburgh, 1813.

3. First Annual Report of the Institution for the Encouragement of Sacred Music, Edinburgh, 1817.

4. Ibid.

5. Observations Upon the Propriety of Establishing a Lancastrian School in Edinburgh, Edinburgh, 1811.

6. Edinburgh Subscription Library, Alphabetical List of Shareholders from 1794-1884.

7. General Minutes of the Edinburgh Subscription Library.

8. First Report of the Society for the Suppression of Begging, Edinburgh, 1814.

9. Report of the Ordinary Directors of the Edinburgh Lancastrian School Society, Edinburgh, 1813.

10. Rules of the Edinburgh Auxiliary Missionary Society, 1813.

11. Jorgen Elklit, 'Nominal record linkage and the study of non-secret voting : a Danish case', Journal of Interdisciplinary History, XV, 3, (Winter, 1985), pp.419-443.

12. R.J. Morris, The Leeds Middle Class, 1820-1850, First Report to the SSRC/ESRC Committee of Economic Affairs No. B/00/24/0003/1.

13. The sample of the Post Office Directory which was detailed in Chapter Two is the basis of this and similar comments.

14. Report of the Committee appointed by the Commissioners of Police to Inquire into the Practicality of Suppressing the Practice of Common Begging, Edinburgh, 1812.

15. The sources which contained the subscription lists for these Societies were the Annual Report of the Society for the Support of Gaelic Schools, 1811 (122 names excluding anonymous and non-Edinburgh subscribers), Annual Report of the Edinburgh Bible Society, 1812 (277 names), Annual Report of the Edinburgh Gratis Sabbath School Society, 1816 (213 names).

CHAPTER EIGHT

CONCLUSIONS

This thesis has examined the ideas and practices of a range of key voluntary associations which were promoted and supported by elements of the middle class in Edinburgh in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. The purposes of such a study were fourfold. Firstly, to highlight the significance of the role of city-wide voluntary associations of the period in handling the socio-economic stresses of population expansion, urbanisation and commercialisation. The concerns of the thesis were less to do with the specific content of supply responses of charity providers, and more to do with the creation of new forms of social authority and the development of institutional mechanisms for controlling resources in the context of the breakdown of parish-based paternalism.

This essentially functional analysis of voluntary associations frequently led into the second area of study: it was intended to treat such institutions heuristically in order to discover what their social form expressed about social relationships both within and between classes. As well as being subject to diagnoses in this way, voluntary associations were also regarded as significant historical agencies in their own right. They defined and reproduced aspects of social power between subscribers and the working classes; between directors, members and the 'public'; and between voluntary associations and the local state. My intention was to investigate the nature of these sets of relationships.

Thirdly, the purpose of studying a range of functional types of voluntary organisations over a short space of time was a strategy chosen to demonstrate regularities in cultural form and consistent patterns of membership characteristics.

It was inferred throughout this thesis that subscription to a

particular Society was an affirmation of its aims and objectives, and implied an affinity felt by the subscriber with like-minded individuals who had been called to action, in specific terms, in published public addresses. Thus, the study of the cultural form and social characteristics of voluntary associations related to my fourth main aim, which was the interpretation of the effect of increasingly institutionalised social practices and ideologies on the consciousness of middle class identity. At the outset, the thesis quite deliberately adopted an operational definition of the middle class largely based on occupational indicators, without imputing class consciousness. Such indicators implied relatively high income; economic and social authority through the ownership of capital, employment of labour and the possession of prestige; and a distinctive style of life expressed through consumption. The study of voluntary associations was an exploration of one aspect of the formation and articulation of an identity of interests as between the Edinburgh middle class and as against the 'objects' of their charity. In other words, this thesis is a contribution to the growing interest of historians in the making of the middle class.

It has been demonstrated that the period 1780 to 1820 was characterised by an increase in the foundation of voluntary associations. Although there was great diversity in their primary aims and objectives, their cultural form was reproduced with such consistency as to allow us to use it as a discrete category of analysis.

A survey of voluntary associations formed in Edinburgh between 1780 and 1810 showed a gradual change in their characteristic typology. The most common form of elite voluntary association in

Edinburgh had been, for most of the eighteenth century, the club or learned Society which adopted exclusionary practices that created a homogenous membership, often dominated by lawyers and landowners. Such Societies were typically small, ephemeral, introverted and showed a low level of institutionalisation. From the late eighteenth century, Societies were characteristically much more open. Organisations such as the Society for the Relief of the Destitute Sick and the Lancastrian School Society publicly advertised their aims, held open public meetings which framed rules and elected committees, collected and published subscriptions, held regular annual general meetings of all the members and published annual reports and accounts. In contrast to the personal selectivity of older Societies, payment of a subscription was usually enough, in itself, to guarantee membership. Such Societies increasingly made claims to act on matters of 'public' interest, supplementing some of the functions of the formal agencies of the local state. They rested authority for such actions on the sanction of 'public' approval of their aims and policies, as indicated by their level of subscription.

This thesis assumed that the emergence of relatively open, pan-urban subscriber democracies which addressed such issues as policing, poor relief, religious and secular education was influenced by changes in the social structure, but also contributed to shaping and reproducing the social structure. In particular, it was considered fruitful to explore the connections between a diverse and expanding middle class presence in Edinburgh and the frequent participation of such groups in the most influential public voluntary associations of the period. A growing but unsupervised labouring population posed perceived and real threats to the property and power of the urban

middle class. Yet the defence of their interests was seen as ill-served by the magistrates, town council and Kirk sessions which they regarded as unresponsive, unaccountable and too restricted by party or sectoral interests.

An expanding and mobile population made existing institutional arrangements for raising and allocating poor relief, maintaining public order, and controlling the secular and religious instruction of youth inadequate. In the field of poor relief, the realities of high prices and cyclical and seasonal unemployment clashed with the failures of the poor laws to aid the able bodied, the lack of a permanent fund of poor relief support together with a deep distrust of setting up such a fund on the grounds of morality and political economy. In education, Lancastrian reformers criticised the failures of the parochial schooling system, just as the Gaelic School Society argued that the SSPCK did not have the resources to meet demand. In the case of policing, the town council's administration of law enforcement was manifestly ineffectual, as demonstrated to contemporaries by the New Year's Eve riot of 1811 and the persistently visible problem of begging and prostitution. Bible and Missionary Societies also pointed to the enormity of their field of operations.

The large middle class, whose social characteristics were examined in Chapter Two, had particular interests in developing new institutions capable of handling such problems in ideological and material terms; voluntary associations were a type of institution well suited to this purpose. The structures of such institutions - the regularised internal and external relationships between members, potential supporters and 'objects', and the mechanisms by which they

generated and allocated resources - were susceptible to being developed in ways which were expressive of the values and material interests of this broad common - interest group.

Voluntary associations were ideal mechanisms for expressing common interests since they were capable of promoting aims and policies on a non-sectarian and non-party basis. Although certain Societies could be identified by contemporaries as originating from a particular sectional interest such as Christopher Anderson's promotion of the Edinburgh Bible Society or the Whig/Dissenting associations of the Lancastrian movement in England, such limitations were overcome by broad appeals to the 'inhabitants', 'citizens', 'public' and 'Christians'.

Such associations clearly widened participation in social affairs. Indeed, evidence in Chapter Seven suggested that voluntary association members were overwhelmingly people who had no place in the formally constituted agencies of local government. However it is equally the case that the coherence of middle class voluntary organisations in Edinburgh and their success in attracting the support of the legal/commercial urban elite can be attributed to the way in which the town council and the Church of Scotland accommodated the impulses of the new movements and were seen to sanction their activities.

The town council was closely associated, for example, with the Society for the Suppression of Begging and the Lancastrian School Society. In Chapter Five, the active participation of certain Church of Scotland ministers, even in associations such as the Edinburgh Bible Society which had a National Church rival was highlighted. On the other hand, the promoters of voluntary associations were

themselves rarely directly hostile to the political or religious establishment even if their activities, such as setting up interdenominational Sunday schools, were an implicit challenge. Sydney Smith's advice to Joseph Lancaster is, perhaps, typical of the tone of the relationship between the voluntary association movement and formal agencies of authority. Although supportive, he urged Lancaster to "abstain from any thing like defiance and contempt of the Establishment which can only irritate without doing the least good." [1]

Deference towards dominant forms of property and authority was a persistent feature of the voluntary associations studied. It was reflected in, for example, the often routine approval of pre-selected lists of high status committee members at general meetings. This was part of the process of building intra-class concensus. It helped to create an image of respectability, disassociated from the more 'dangerous' challenges to constituted authority of radical associations, such as the Friends of the People. Nevertheless, implicit challenges to the Establishment from within the middle class were indeed present. Most importantly, voluntary associations asserted the notion that the exercise of power required the approbation of the 'inhabitants' and that directorships were accountable to their interests.

Part of the process of creating accountable institutions which were responsive to the 'public' interest was the publishing of open accounts of their activities and financial affairs. Through the annual report and the annual general meeting they provided channels of accountability in the consumption and distribution of resources. The control of resources was a crucial interest of the middle class.

The issue of begging, for example, was of such wide concern precisely because of the disruptive economic effects of resources being allocated in an indiscriminate way. There was little confidence in the magistrates and Kirk sessions to effectively manage poor relief. Such concerns were related to political reform of local government, a key demand of which was accountability. Thus, Thomas Smith, a relative newcomer to the town council in the late eighteenth century published criticisms of the opaqueness of the city's financial affairs due to the intentionally unintelligible state of the chamberlain's cash book and the failure to keep accounts on a 'mercantile principle'. [2] Openness and financial probity provided the basis of public confidence in voluntary associations.

Voluntary associations also contrasted with formal institutions of power by acting as agencies of modernisation and change. At one level they promoted new 'rational' schemes such as the monitorial schooling system or the 'moral policing' of the lunatic asylum. At another level new ideas were mediated more diffusely and pervasively such as the political economy of the Beggars Society employment committee. Societies were able to interpret newly experienced social phenomena and give them meaning. The mass of urban poor, for example, could be reduced to understandable categories of deserving and undeserving.

Thus voluntary associations played important roles as alternative mechanisms for mobilising collective resources of infrastructure, capital and personnel in response to modern social issues. However the nature of those responses involved expressions and developments of special kinds of social relationships.

In many of the Societies which did not claim to exist primarily

for the benefit or welfare of their members there was an implicit assertion of the rights of 'subscribers' to exercise authority and influence over the 'objects' of charity. Although the types of charity were usually specialised in each Society and the 'objects' carefully defined in the rules, studying a range of Societies revealed striking similarities in ways of relating to the poor. There was a persistent emphasis on a need to examine, evaluate and categorise the objects of charity. Such attitudes were expressive of old prejudices about the individual moral basis of poverty and also newer concerns with bringing them within the market disciplines of a commercial economy. Discrimination was exercised in the allocation of resources such as food, money, employment schemes, medicine, school places and bibles according to criteria influenced by the shared values of subscribers such as piety, industriousness, deference to authority, sobriety and social stability. The practices of discrimination created new relationships of supervision and paternalism as the middle class examined children, distributed bibles, inspected the homes of the poor, nominated patients and counted the threads of yarn returned by the domestic workers of the Beggars Society.

Voluntary associations institutionalised such relationships by providing regularised guidelines on their mode of operation, nominating particular persons to supervisory positions and establishing functional buildings which conditioned the way social classes interacted. As such institutional practices became widely recognised as normative, this amounted to a legitimation of the exercise of power by the property-owners, employers and leisured elite who overwhelmingly participated in voluntary Societies.

However, the study of voluntary associations also revealed important facets of intra-class relationships. Most of the Societies which have formed the focus of this thesis appealed to a city-wide constituency and identified their aims and interests with those of the 'public', claiming to be representative of them. In fact, although such institutions often had a membership drawn from a wide range of wealth and status groups within the middle class, the proportion of members drawn from the legal/commercial/rentier elite usually exceeded the proportion of these occupational groups in the middle class as a whole. By the same token, there was an underrepresentation of lower middle class wealth and status groups such as craftsmen and shopkeepers. This pattern of unequal representation was particularly marked in Societies with close links with the political or religious Establishment. Moreover, there was a persistent deference in many Societies to the landed elite who were a crucial source of capital in educational and medical institutions and, as patrons, were considered by the members to confer respectability on the Society.

The elite, therefore, monopolised positions of influence in voluntary associations of the kind discussed here, while projecting themselves as representatives of the whole urban community. In our period, lower middle class elements displayed a propensity to consent to elite leadership. This was typified by the craftsmen and manufacturers who formed the committee of the Association for the Relief of Industrious Labourers and Mechanics Out of Employment in 1816. They stated,

> "... the committee are plain men of business, mere matter of fact men, making no pretensions to those enlarged views which distinguish the speculative philosopher. They gladly leave to others the task of ascertaining the causes

> and consequences of the present distress, happy if, by recording the facts that have come under their review, it shall appear just and expedient to the higher classes of society, to adopt some system of operations calculated to ameliorate the sufferings of a most valuable portion of their countrymen." [3]

Indeed, the 'higher classes' responded to this unemployment crisis by forming a Committee for Affording Relief to the Labouring Classes in the City and Suburbs of Edinburgh, following a public meeting, called by the magistrates, in December of 1816.

In order to maintain and give legitimacy to such positions of authority the urban elite attached great importance to the creation of a public constituency. This thesis has argued that the published annual report was the principal means of mediating this relationship. In it the directors advertised their aims, demonstrated their effectiveness, refuted public criticisms and defined their constituency by addressing their readers in specific language and advertising lists of like-minded subscribers.

By the second decade of the nineteenth century the greatly increased number of voluntary associations were competing for public support and were highly sensitive to the increases and decreases of their subscriptions. The Edinburgh and Scottish Bible Societies each sought contributions for a common cause, as did Missionary Societies. Religious affiliations were not the only cause of rivalry. The Edinburgh New Town Dispensary caused fierce public debate by opening in 1815 and diminishing support for the existing Public Dispensary. When the Rev. David Ritchie refused to permit a church collection in support of the Public Dispensary because his parishioners had already supported the New Town Dispensary, Dr. Andrew Duncan wrote to him saying, "At present the two charities are decidedly rivals, and the

New Town Dispensary has already had the effect of diminishing considerably the funds of the old one. The Old Dispensary has been deserted by some of the most opulent Annual Subscribers, and it is now likely to be deserted by the most opulent parish." [4]

The annual general meeting was an important means of institutionalising the relationships between the directors of voluntary societies, the annual subscribers and the 'public'. The A.G.M. was the parliament of the subscriber democracy. All who had paid a specified minimum subscription could attend and participate in electing the directors and ratifying the annual report. These were 'public' meetings but the public was delineated by the social filter of ability to pay the subscription fee.

It has been argued in the thesis that in this period the practice of seeking public sanction on public issues was not universally accepted. Kinkaid McKenzie, a town councillor, only reluctantly published his views on the issue of whether the city chamberlain should be a permanent appointment, stating "I am aware of the general impropriety of such appeals (to public opinion); of their tendency to favour that vague and groundless distrust of every constituted authority, which, in the present times, is unfortunately too prevalent; and of the many bad passions which they either produce or foster". [5]

This fear of the political dangers of open meetings was shared by the county sherrif Sir William Rae who was reported in the Caledonian Mercury to have argued that all public meetings had a dangerous tendency to break unanimity and introduce political discussion. [6] The Whig advocate J.A. Murray challenged this view by arguing that public meetings were "absolutely necessary for

preserving the healthful action of the body politic". [7] Murray asked, in an address to the 'Inhabitants of Edinburgh', "Had not everyman in this free country a right to the fair and honest expression of his sentiments on every great public question ... so long as it was used with propriety and decorum?" [8]

The meetings of the voluntary associations which have been discussed throughout this thesis met Murray's caveat of "propriety and decorum". As the detailed report of the Edinburgh Bible Society in Chapter Five showed, the agenda and procedures of such meetings created a carefully controlled consensus. This consensus could then be communicated to the wider public in the published annual report in a way which represented the aims and policies of the Society as moderate and mainstream.

The nomination and election of office bearers also appears to have been a matter of careful stage-management. Unanimous approval of a list of directors was a common feature of annual reports. Nevertheless, the rights of subscribers to nominate and elect office bearers to manage the affairs of the Society on their behalf was considered important by members and enabled the directors to claim a public mandate. When the charter of the Royal Public Dispensary introduced ex-officio managers this subversion of subscriber democracy was met with outrage. Dr. Hume declared the principle that "only those who give money to the charity should have the right to nominate its office bearers. They should not be superceded in that right, by any Public Body, however respectable." [9]

In most of the Societies we have studied with town-wide or national aspirations of influence, deference to the legal/landed elite and religious sources of authority in the nomination of office

bearers was common. This elite, who were often responsible for framing the values and policies of Societies, were highly successful in organising consent to their leadership not only from the middle class but also from sections of the working classes through their support for numerous penny-a-week auxiliary institutions. Nevertheless consent was engendered partly because the analysis of social problems, the values they reflected and the solutions proposed by voluntary Societies made sense of social experience and struck a chord with the developing identities of the middle class.

The identities of 'citizens' or 'inhabitants' of the town of Edinburgh were frequent terms of address in voluntary association appeals. For the middle class the town was an abstraction which expressed their common interests. Associations such as the Society for the Suppression of Begging, whose administration utilised twenty-six newly created police districts, helped to give definition to the town as a social entity and inform its householders with a sense of shared responsibility for its welfare. Similarly, religious and educational Societies transcended district or parochial boundaries.

We have seen that voluntary associations frequently identified their particular aims with the interests of the political stability and commercial prosperity of the whole community. Subscriptions to a Society can usefully be interpreted by historians as investments which facilitated commerce and trade by, for example, creating an industrious and deferential workforce, relieving the burden of local taxes or stimulating high street spending by removing the nuisance of beggars.

Moreover, as was discussed in Chapter Two, there was a certain civic pride in Edinburgh as a town which contemporaries perceived to

be relatively free from the social antagonisms of manufacturing modes of production. The persistent interests, expressed by voluntary associations, with social stability and the role of the middle class as patrons and guardians of the poor was influenced by the experiences of relationships in a social structure characterised by various levels of hierarchial, face-to-face relationships between master and domestic servant, shopkeeper and customer, craft manufacturer and apprentice, landlord and tenant, lawyer and client, government official and patron. Thus, when men and women of property responded to appeals addressed to 'inhabitants' they were affirming a shared sense of social experience and common economic interest which had close affinity with the town.

This social phenomenon was repeated in many British towns and cities during this period. Edinburgh, however was something of a special case because the sense of social interest in the urban community was sometimes broadened to include a responsibility for national leadership. This was a role which had traditionally been adopted by the SSPCK and certain 'improvement' Societies in the eighteenth century. In this study it was particularly noted in educational and medical Societies. These Societies typically encouraged the establishment of auxiliary institutions which were independent but which copied the rules and objectives of the parent association in Edinburgh. In Societies such as the Edinburgh Society for the Support of Gaelic Schools there was a strong sense of national identity in the language of annual reports and the notion that the civilised metropolis had a patriotic duty to promote the welfare of its fellow countrymen in the Highlands and Islands.

Societies which appealed to nationalist identities, however,

were generally unsuccessful in attracting wide support among Edinburgh inhabitants. The Gaelic School Society had just over one hundred Edinburgh subscribers every year between 1813 and 1817. The Institution for the Education of Deaf and Dumb Children, as we showed in Chapter Six, fell short of its aspirations to be a national organisation. By the end of our period, plans to build four national lunatic asylums, including one at Edinburgh, were failing to the extent that Andrew Duncan wrote of "the deplorable situation of Pauper Lunatics, even in the opulent, flourishing and charitable Metropolis of Scotland". [10] In the case of national asylums, state intervention rather than voluntary contributions was considered by Duncan to be the most effective means of financing and managing such institutions.

Thus, middle class voluntary associations were most successful when appealing to identities connected with the experiences of living and working in the immediate urban environment. The Society for the Suppression of Beggars, for example, which was directly concerned with the social stability and commercial prosperity of the community, had the largest Edinburgh membership of any single organisation of the period and, as evidence in Chapter Seven showed, drew support from a range of people with other affiliations to different types of Societies. Thus, although within the middle class there were clearly social divisions based on status, religious adherence and party loyalty, voluntary associations provided a consensual framework which emphasised unifying strands of identity and created a basis for effective collective action.

There was a coherence of response to urban issues which demonstrated a developing sense of shared values and mutual

interests. Issues which were the cause of intra-class antagonism in England, such as Sunday schools or Lancastrian schools, had cross-party and interdenominational support in Edinburgh. [11] This is not to deny that Societies frequently encountered opposition. Poor relief Societies were often regarded as a disincentive to industry and virtuous habits or even as a source of financial support for revolutionary leaders. [12] The personal motives of the directors of certain institutions were, as we saw with the Beggars Society, treated with some suspicion. Religious and educational Societies were regarded jealously by some elements of the Church of Scotland who feared the influence of Dissenting principles. Nevertheless, such opposition tended to be somewhat muted, at least in the published presentations of public opinion.

Moreover, there was considerable interconnection between Societies. Chapter Seven showed that, although religious and status differences influenced social alignments to some extent, there was a substantial degree of shared membership. There was also a sharing of institutional networks. The Bible Society, for example, used visitors from the Destitute Sick Society to identify 'objects', and the Beggars Society used the resources of the parochial school, the Charity workhouse and the public dispensary.

By the 1820s, the experiences of such collective action had the effect of creating an articulate, self-conscious urban elite whose social confidence and political aspirations had been partly influenced by their control of local institutions. Thus, in putting the case for electoral reform in Edinburgh, Cockburn drew attention to the contrast between modern public institutions and the traditionally exclusive corporate bodies:

> "The city has tripled in bulk; the old aristocracy has worn out; the population is infinitely more varied, and it is sufficiently large to keep alive that spirit which is peculiar to large societies; the press has been emancipated; almost all modern institutions are under the direction of the inhabitants, the Commercial Bank has liberated them from the control of other establishments, in which mercantile accommodation was made an engine of political influence ... and, above all, there has been a constant, deepening, and undeniable contrast between the success of those concerns to which the inhabitants have been freely admitted, and those from which they are rigidly excluded. In short, a <u>public</u> has arisen in Edinburgh." [13]

This pamphlet neatly summarises the processes which we have described throughout this thesis. It was addressed to property owners ('householders'), drew attention to their common experiences as 'inhabitants' and represented them in terms of the wider community: the 'public'.

The sense of authority in shaping social and economic relationships through local institutions also, in this period, limited the breadth of middle class consciousness. Although the impetus for many voluntary associations came from other urban places with similar problems, there was little evidence of a cohesive national middle class sense of identity or organisation. Cockburn, for example, urged that each town make out its own special case for parliamentary reform.

However, at the level of the town, voluntary association formation had been part of the process of the creation of a carefully defined public constituency. This constituency - the 'inhabitants', the 'householders', the 'subscribers' - were informed with a shared sense of social authority in influencing supervisory relationships with the working classes and promoting practices beneficial to the economic interests of the middle class. The effectiveness of

voluntary associations in the flexible mobilisation of collective resources rested on their claims to be responsive to the interests of this broad public constituency.

The experiences of subscribers as active participants in public affairs, holding their leaders to account and sanctioning social policy at regular intervals, contrasted with their exclusion from the relatively closed institutions of the town council, incorporated trades and Kirk sessions, upon whose functions their activities increasingly encroached. Such traditional sources of authority did have the ability to use prescriptive power which at times buttressed the effectiveness of voluntary associations by, for example, sanctioning church collections, granting them seals of cause or supplementing their activities with legal authority.

The institutions of the local state were, at times, successful in accommodating the impulses of the voluntary association movement. However they could not contain its essentially open nature which addressed a spatial and social constituency of subscribers. This was to be the basis for the effective pursuit of middle class interests in the first half of the nineteenth century.

ENDNOTES

1. Letter from Sydney Smith, April, 1808, (Edinburgh University Library) AAF. 1732.

2. Thomas Smith, Address to the Town Council, 1799.

3. Association for the Relief of Industrious Labourers and Mechanics Out of Employment, Edinburgh, 1816, p.13.

4. Correspondence Between the Rev. Dr. D. Ritchie and Dr. Duncan Sen., Edinburgh, Neill, 1817.

5. Kinkaid McKenzie, Statement, (s.d.)

6. Thoughts on the proposed New Police Bill and other proceedings connected with the county and city of Edinburgh, by an Old Citizen, Edinburgh, 1816, pp.27-32.

7. Ibid., p.22.

8. Ibid., p.31.

9. Copy of a paper presented to the medical officers of the Royal Public Dispensary, 1819.

10. Andrew Duncan, sen., Letter to His Majesty's Sherrifs - Depute in Scotland recommending the establishment of four national asylums for the reception of criminal and pauper lunatics, Edinburgh, 1818, p.5.

11. For a discussion of divisions see, R.J. Morris, Class, Sect and Party: the making of the British middle class, 1820-1850, Manchester U.P., 1990.

12. See, for example, On the Use and Abuse of Charity, earnestly addressed to Associations for Relief of the Distressed Throughout the Country, Edinburgh and London, 1819, p.11.

13. Considerations Submitted to the Householders of Edinburgh, on the state of their Representation in Parliament, Edinburgh, 1823, p.6. (emphasis in original).

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Abbreviations : ECA = Edinburgh City Archives
ECL = Edinburgh City Library (Edinburgh Room)
EU = University of Edinburgh Library

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